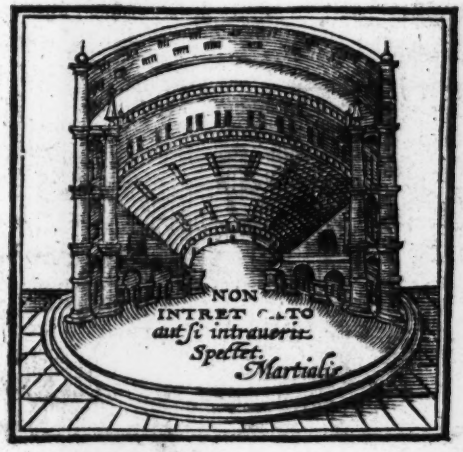
CORNV-COPIÆ,

Pasquils Night-cap:

OR,

Antidot for the Head-ache.



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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

Proæmium.

VNTO *the kindeſt men that euer wiu'd,*
whoſe titles from the Cuckoe *are deriu'd,*
And thereof Cuckolds *named:*
To all the Francklins *of the horne,*
Whom ſcoffing Peaſants vſe to ſcorne,
And greatly haue defamed:
And vnto all our friends in Cuckold-ſhire
Health, happie fortune, and their hearts deſire.

Paſquil, *a terror erſt to forreine States,*
To mightie Princes and great Potentates,
In euerie other nation,
Perceiuing here the Horne defaced,
And honeſt Cuckolds *ſore diſgraced,*
with termes of deteſtation,
Lately in England *is arriu'd from thence*
In challenge of a Cuckolds *excellence.*

If anie Cuckold-maker *him deride,*
(*For none but* Cuckold-makers *haue enui'd,*
A Cuckolds *commendation*)
Or fleering knaues which on it looke,
Condemne it for an idle booke
As ſtill it is their faſhion,
Paſquil *proteſts, allthough they ſcoffe and flout*
Hereafter he with them will haue about.

And

And little doth he care, though they forſake it,
For not for them did Paſquil *vndertake it,*
To winne their affectation:
For honeſt Cuckolds *was it penn'd,*
To them this VVorke *doth he commend,*
And craues their acceptation.
Then grudge not (gentle Sirs, without offence)
Kindly to reade a Cuckolds *iuſt defence.*

And yet in reading here I humbly craue,
No foolish applications you would haue,
Nor cenſure thinges at randon,
Nor priuate meanings would ſurmiſe,
whereby fond quarrels might ariſe,
True freindship to abandon.
Nothing but mirth did Paſquil *here pretend,*
Iudge not before you read: and there an end.

Paſquil Anglicanus

——— Iuueneſque Seneſque
Et pueri naſum Rhinocerotis habent.
Sed abſit a iocorum noſtrorum ſimplicitate malignus interpres.

Cornucopiæ.

OR,

Pasquils Night-cap.

FY, what a vaine-conceited world is this?
Whose iudgment, error blindly leades astray,
Accounting that as right which is amisse,
Laughing at follie, as a sport or plaie.
Great sinnes are termed but a great mans pleasure,
When lesser faults are plagued out of measure:
New titles salue old sores; and euerie sinne
Some honest name is allwaies shrowded in.

A Broker now is thought an honest Trade,
Though some by selling of stolne goods doe liue,
Theeuing is now an occupation made,
Though men the name of Tailor doe it giue.
Bribes are accounted but a freindly fee,
Dissembling taken for pure honestie:
Pride is reputed handsome in apparell,
And he most valiant, that seemes most to quarrell.

The goutie *Machiuilian* murderer,
Whose codpeece is neere 20. winters old,
Now scornes the title of an vsurer,
And must be fashion'd in an other mold:
The greybeard must a Monie-man be cleped,
Because great store of monie he hath reaped:
Or Mony-maister he to name must haue,
Though he vnto his monie be a slaue.

A Tof-pot ſpend-thrift, and a ſwaggering *Iacke*,
Which haue no pleaſure but to drinke apace,
And take in liquor, till their bellies cracke,
Looking as red as ſcarlet in the face,
Muſt be good fellowes: and the fooliſh Boore
That ſpendes his monie to maintaine a whore,
Is term'd a youthfull and a gallant lad:
Though men of iudgement think the gallant mad.

The Prodigall that waſtes his fathers pence
In carding, dicing, riot, and exceſſe,
Muſt haue a title of an other ſence,
A liberall man, and void of niggardneſſe:
Gulam euacuat vt Arcam impleat.
And he, whoſe ſhape doth like a Ghoſt appeare
For want of victuals, food, and bellie-cheare,
The ſtanued miſer, fearefull, pale and wan,
Is the good husband, and the thriuing man.

Luſt is eſteemed as a youthfull ſport,
Laſciuious geſture, as the Courtlie faſhion:
And wanton minions, with the wanton ſort
Thruſt modeſt matrons forth of reputation.
Sinne is no ſhame: O bluſh my muſe to tell!
More ſhame befalls the good for liuing well;
Wiues play the wantons, husbãds were the horne,
And patience, (though a vertue) weares the ſcorne.

A ſimple gull, clad in a ſilken caſe
Brought out of Satans ward-robe for his backe,
Which learnes new faſhions, and forgets old grace,
Turning his pinnes, till all his ſtringes doe cracke:
Which for a ſpaniſh blocke his landes doth ſell,
Or for to buy a ſtanding Pickadell, (ſpurres,
Which ſtruttes, and ſtampes to moue his golden
That with their gingling he may feare the curres.

If

If his sweet worship with his horse-taile locke,
(As he doth trauerse neatly through the street)
Scrape fauour with some female-wedded smocke,
Which by her carriage seemes for pastime meet
Straight he is bold to bourd her to the plaie,
And either she must yeild, or saie him nay,
And howsoeuer matters after frame,
Her husbands forehead still beares all the shame

For whether gossips when they sit and talke,
(As women enuie one an others blisse)
Seing the gallant sometimes thither walke,
May by coniecture shrewdly speake of this,
Or whether she herselfe may spread the sailes
(As womens tongues be like to yong lambs tailes)
And tell her pleasure to an other friend:
And thus the world haue knowledge in the end.

Or whether braue *Iuuentus* play the blab,
Which vaunces himselfe a gentleman at least;
And when he waxeth weary of his drab,
Meeting his mates at Taueme, or at feast,
Reueale the fault: or howsoeuer it bee
That time bringes forth the fruites of lecherie,
I cannot iudge; yet thus much I can say
The Cuckold carries all the shame away

As for the woman; she's a wanton lasse,
A good kind wench; or of the dealing Trade:
The cuckold-maker (though as fond an Asse
As euer in this world, dame Nature made)
Is term'd a gallant gentleman, and braue,
Though he by right should other title haue,
But for her husband, he which weares the horne,
He is plaine cuckold, and must beare the scorne

Sometimes this prodigall the Chapman plaies,
And to the Mistresse sometimes ill alli'd:
When as, God knowes, these are but subtile waies,
Deuised, least their knauery should be spide,
Else with her husband company doth keepe
To graft the horns vpon his head more deepe.
And thousand other shifts do they deuise,
To horne the Cuckolds head, and hood his eies.

And yet not onely do they blind his sight,
Which not so much as dreames of any wile,
But oft it happens by a cunning slight,
One crafty knaue another doth beguile:
And when the Hunter thinkes to strike the Bucke,
His hopes are crost by some disaster lucke,
„ For true it is, when Fortune comes by chance,
„ There fortune helpes the boldest to aduance.

But certs it is a strange and vncouth thing,
To see a pilfring and a picke-purse knaue:
Which well deserues to stretch an hempen string,
And climbe the gallowes for to seeke his graue:
Diue to the bottome of a true mans purse,
Take out his coine, and not accounted worse;
And he, to whom the losse did erst befall,
Passe with a scoffe, to mend the match withall.

These are the humours of these present daies,
Where lust is taken for a lawfull thing,
The *Dolphin* on the water skippes and plaies,
When as *Arion* soundes the siluer string:
A homely bit in secret some disgest
Better then dainties, when their husbands feast;
Panis furtiuus dulcis. Stolne bread is sweete: In *April* and the *Spring*
Needes must you giue the Cuckoe leaue to sing.

And

And (ſooth to ſay) needes muſt that pleaſant fowle
Straine forth the plaine-ſong of her pretty note,
When crooked age, halfe parting with his ſoule,
Will on a wanton Minion ſeeme to dote.
And hee which hath one foote within the graue,
Will needes beſtride a gennet yong and braue.
Well may the Cuckoe ſing at ſuch a wedding,
When age and youth together go a bedding.

Nath'leſſe I will not iuſtifie this part,
And bolſter vp vaine folly with my quill,
A frolicke forehead hath a wanton heart,
This wicked world is prone enough to ill:
But in my iudgement, if it might ſo paſſe;
An old mad foole, that weds a youthfull Laſſe,
Deſerues a coxecombe, and to be withall,
The chiefe Commander in Sow-guelders Hall.

Well erſt *Lycurgus* in his prouidence,
Wiſely forbad all aged men to marry;
For (certs) he knew their inſufficience,
Muſt by al reaſon make their wiues miſcarry:
When once the ſtocke is dead, decai'd and rotten
Small is the fruite which from that tree is gotten.
Yong Plants affoord increaſe in ſeemely order,
Shrubbes ſerue for nothing but to fill the border.

Would it not make a *Cynnicke* laugh the while,
And *Agelaſtus* for to ſing and whiſtle,
(VVhich ne're in all his life was ſeene to ſmile,
But when an old Mare once did eate a thiſtle)
If they ſhould ſee a whithered rotten ſcold,
A toothleſſe beldame, ſickely, lame and old;
VVhen ſhee can neither go nor ſtand vpright,
Addreſſe herſelfe in armour to the fight.

The father of *Cræſus.*

And is it not as fooliſh and as mad,
To ſee old *Mumpſimus*, that gouty Sire,
Pranke vp himſelfe like to a youthfull lad,
And looke as handſome as a Pippin Squire?
And when hee ſcarce hath breath to keepe in life,
Deſire to couple with a youthfull wife?
The foole deſerues to weare a moatley coate,
VVhen he ſhould thinke on death, begins to dote.

For little knowes the VVoodcocke, what pertaines,
Vnto the pleaſures of the marriage bed,
VVhen that an empty paunch for food complaines,
Nature requires (I wis) it ſhould bee fed,
A yong wilde colt, when graſſe begins to faile,
Leaps forth his bounds, ſprings ouer hedge & pale
And neuer reſts in quiet, till hee know
Or finde a field, where better graſſe doth grow.

No maruell then; if that a luſty Laſſe,
That lookes as freſh, as doth a flower in May,
VVhen ſhe is mated with a fooliſh Aſſe,
VVhich ſtormes like VVinter on his wedding Day,
Sometimes ſeeke change of paſture and Prouant,
Becauſe her commons be at home ſo ſcant,
For in a dri'd red herring, and poore *Iohns*,
Remaines more vertue then in old mens bones.

VVhat comfort can a newly married wife
Haue in the company of ſuch a drone,
VVhich (like a Cricket) doth conſume his life,
And lies in bed as cold as any ſtone,
Mouing no more, then doth a dead mans coarſe,
Coughing and ſpitting, like a rotten horſe,
Pain'd with the Palſie, vexed with the Gout?
Better a woman were to liue without.

VVould

VVould it not grieue a dog to ſmell the meate,
And haue it hanging ſtill before his noſe,
Yet cannot get a morſell for to eate,
Though hunger force him barke, and tell his woes?
Leſſe were his torment neuer to eſpy it,
Then to behold the meate, and not come nie it,
Farre better were it ſtill a maid to tarry, (marry.
Then want ſuch things, for which a maid doth

And fitter were it knocke her on the head,
And rid her forth the ſorrowes of this life,
Then by a lingring paine to liue as dead,
Void of the ſports belong vnto a wife:
And like to *Tantalus* ſtill thirſt for drinke,
VVhen as her lips do well nere touch the brinke.
This is the cauſe prouokes an honeſt maid
Become a Miſtreſſe in the dealing Trade.

For when ſhe wants that which her neighbors haue,
VVhich are not halfe ſo beautifull as ſhe,
So propper, fine, welfauoured, and braue,
Neither ſo fit for ſport and iollity;
Yet bleſſed by their fortune and good hap,
Sit playing with their children in their lap. (ter,
VVel may ſhe with much patience brook the mat-
But (ſure) her teeth perforce muſt runne of water.

And if ſhe fall in longing for the Thing,
VVhich is the inſtrument of earthly pleaſure,
And binds more firmely then the wedding ring,
Begetting little children out of meaſure;
Her health and life vpon her longing ſtands.
And what good can ſhee looke for at his hands,
VVhoſe feeble ioints are ſtiffe for want of marrow
And hath leſſe courage then an old cock ſparrow?

Scarce

Scarce is an old man fit to beare a launce,
Or play the souldier in a warlike feild;
For might he wantes his weapons to aduance,
And to resist his foe with speare and sheild,
But lesse of force he is a maid to wed,
And play the souldier in the marriagebed.
For he that lackes strength to endure the fight,
Is no fit man to skirmish in the night

Ouid.

Wedding (some saie) it is a kind of warre,
Whose feild betweene a paire of shetes is pight,
(Though otherwise sometimes befall a iarre,
When huswiues fingers chance to be too light)
Then he which such a matter goes about,
Must needes be strong, couragious, and stout,
For sharper conflictes marriage doth betide
Than euer souldier in the warres hath tride.

The most victorious man that euer liu'd,
(Strong *Hercules* that famous warriour,
Which twelue admired labours once atchiu'd,
And neuer fought but prou'd a conquerour)
Though he with strength was ouercome of no mã,
Was not of force to wrestle with a woman,
But tooke the foile, and gaue her leaue to win,
And for his penance was enioyn'd to spin,

Socrates.

Yea he, which by the Oracle was said
To be the wisest person in his time,
After that he was married to a maid,
Which would not loose the pleasures of her prime,
For all his knowledge was esteem'd a sot,
And beastly crowned with a chamber-pot
Strength is but weake, & wisedome seemes a foole,
When *Cupid* leades them into *Venus* schoole

Facilè diuinabam post tantum tonitru sequuturam pluuiam.

If

If then the greatest courage be to slender,
And learned heads as sottish as a blocke,
When once they combat with the female gender,
And enter disputation with the smocke:
How can an aged, silly, foolish Asse,
Thinke to encounter with a youthfull Lasse,
Neither of might the battell to endure,
Nor well approued of his furniture?

Yet if (forsooth) there be no remedy,
But that the doting Gray-beard must be wed:
Let ancient *Nestor* for to please his eye,
Make choice of old *Ninosa* for his bed.
For still by nature they do best agree,
Which are alike in age and quality:
And sooner will the North-pole meet the South,
Then frozen Age be pleasant vnto Youth.

One asked of *Diogenes* in iest,
What time of life a man were best to marry?
Well he replide: *For youth I think it best,*
Because it is too soone, that he may tarry,
And for an old man, since it is too late,
Let him content himselfe with single state.
A little wind blowes blossomes from the tree,
And rotten apples eate vnpleasantly.

Iuueni nondùm
Seni nunquàm.

Scarce I suppose, that any yong Maid would
Consume her Summer by cold Winters fire;
Though by constraint, or for the Misers gold,
Some haue aduentured on an aged Sire:
But either she before hath had a fall,
And weds old Crust that he may father all:
Or else to haue more scope and liberty,
Vnder a colour for adultery.

But whatsoeuer the pretence do proue,
That yong and old do iointly come together,
VVell may the woman make a shew of loue,
And smooth her brow in token of faire weather,
And at the first seeme louing on her part,
Yet sure I am shee loues him not in heart.
For if that fortune blesse her with good hap, (cap.
Doubtlesse his head shall weare a horne-wrought

And (certs) a Cuckold is a dignity,
To good by much for such a doting Swaine,
And to the worship of that Company,
It is a great discredit and a staine,
To haue that gouty Peasant reare his Creast,
And thinke himselfe a Cuckold with the best:
In my conceit, his wife is much too blame,
To grace him with the credit of that name.

Obiection. But here (me thinkes) I heare an apish knaue,
Demanding in his proud and scoffing fashion:
Are forked heads of late become so braue,
And hornes aspired to such reputation,
That this word (Cuckold) which was erst a name
Alwaies attended with reproach and shame,
Should on a suddaine in our times step forth,
And proue a name of credit and great worth?

VVhat glory can hee challenge, or renowne,
VVhose wife is truly noted for a whore?
Keeping anothers children as his owne,
And beares the badge of infamy before?
VVhat credit to a Cuckold can befall,
VVhose wife, as comon as VVestminster Hall,
Bestowes on others what is his by right,
And of the Forked Order dubs him Knight?

Peace

Peace prating *Cynicke*, least thou prouoke to bolt. Confutation.
A snarling curre will barke at euery season.
The grosser foole, the sooner shoots his bolt,
Although his wordes be void of wit and reason.
Little thou know'st (poore foole) thy great amisse,
In scandalizing such a name as this,
Which in thy rashnesse thus dost injury,
Thy selfe, thy friends, and famous Cuckoldry.

But whatsoere thou art, that seem'st to scorne,
Carping the wel-fare of anothers state,
And thus deris't the credit of the horne.
(To great a glory for a scoffing mate)
Seeke not too much a Cuckold to defame,
For feare thy selfe be subiect to that name,
True is the saying, though it seeme a iest,
The Bird is filthy that defiles her nest.

And how canst thou repute thy selfe as free,
And quite exempted from the Cuckoes song,
Since thousands (farre superiour vnto thee)
Grudge not her ditty should to them belong?
For any a man of woman borne,
Is subiect by destiny to weare the horne:
And though as yet no hornes attend vpon thee,
Fortune hereafter may bestow them on thee. *Actu vel potentia.*

If thou be linked in the *Gordian* knot,
And bound in fetters of the marriage state:
Grieue not the hornes should fall vnto thy lot,
Or that the Cuckoe sings before thy gate.
For if thou marry, still make sute of this,
To beare with patience, what thy fortune is,
Neither repine a Cuckold for to bee,
But bleese thy fate, and thanke thy destiny.

And neuer loue thy wife a whit the worse,
For which (I wis) thou art beholding to her:
Nor seeme for this to frown, brawle, sweare, & curse.
Because she hath a little bent a doer;
But rather praise her for her kind deuotion,
Since shee hath lift thee vp to such promotion:
Be not dismaid, though saucy knaues do iest;
Thou art exalted to beare such a creast.

Knight of the Forked Order and not inferior to some new Knights.

And let base fleering scoundrels talke their fill,
And idle muddy braines out-braue their betters,
The world doth want no fooles, nor euer will:
Dolts scoffe at learning, which scarce know a letter.
And lame blind *Bayard* euen is as bold,
As brauer horses which for more are sold:
None is more prest to blot a Cuckolds name,
Then he which is both void of wit and shame.

Now if these spurre-blind Peasants could but see
How much themselues they blemish and disgrace:
Caue ne patrem ferias. And how they shame their friends and progeny,
Their kindred, their acquaintance, and their race,
They would not speake so rashly as they vse,
Nor seeme so much kind Cuckolds to abuse:
The greater is their folly to deprauc,
That title which perchance themselues may haue.

Better it were for old men say the best,
Or else say nothing, and so hold their tongue,
Then at a Cuckold either scoffe or iest,
VVhich might as well to them before belong:
And let the married without feare and shame,
Seeke to vphold and patronize that name,
Clearer he is not which the same denies;
For (certs) blind men do swallow many flies.

And

And as for yong men, which doe chiefly scorne
The ancient badge of famous Cuckoldrie:
It is their dutie to applaud the horne,
And to defend it by their chiualrie,
And at all times a Cuckolds part to take,
Both for their credits and their kindreds sake,
Though now their head-peeee be not fully cast,
Each dog must haue his day: No time is past.

Neither can they exempt themselues as free,
Allthough in marriage they haue had no doing
At Cuckolds-hauen manie landed bee
Euen in the verie time they go a woing.
And some haue such good fortune in their play
They proue right Cuckolds on their wedding day,
For certaine I haue heard of such a lurch
The verie howre before they went to Church

Bachelers may be Cuckolds; when one is faire promised and an other speedes.

What person is he of so special gift,
That can affirme he doth a Virgin Marrie?
Manie a wench hath had a seeree life
Which of a Virgin still the name doth carrie,
In euerie corner maides there are great store;
Yet diuers of them haue been tried before:
A Iade in smith-field sooner may you find,
That buy a courser, sound of limbe and winde.

Wise is that child (the common Prouerb saith
Though scarce I doe beleeue it as my Creed)
Which so much knowledge of his father hath,
He can auouch, that this is hee indeed.
For though the mother doe protest and sweare
Her husband did beget what she doth beare,
Yet now adaies men are so much beguild,
They oft proue fathers to an others child.

This hath the vsuall practise of this time
Made most apparant, and as cleare as day,
For when yong gentlemen be in their prime,
And giue themselues to wantonnes and play:
If that they chance a country-maid to pricke,
And with a Timpanie the wench grow sicke,
Then straight his seruingman or hackney-foole
Must be a couer to his maisters stoole.

And not alone are seruingmen so mad,
To father what an other hath begot,
But better persons now and then are glad
To taste what others put into the pot,
For scarce a wife of any gallant carriage
Doth now perfourme what she hath vow'd in mar-
And so great vertue hath attracting gold, riage,
Manie cannot be honest, though they would.

If some seeme chast, it doth of this proceed,
They haue the wit to doe, and not be spied,
And know by deepe dissembling and good heed,
With sober lookes their wanton lustes to hide.
Some woemen must be wo'ed, they are so chast,
And some there are which tempt poore men as fast
That to conclude, as *Ariosto* taught,
Manie of them be lewd, vnchast, and naught.

Herodotus.

Phar'o, the King of *Egypt*, being blind
For ten yeares space, made triall of this matter,
When by the *Oracle* he was assing'd
To wash his eies in such a womans water,
Which kept her faith inuiolate and right,
And neuer had to doe with any wight
But onely with her husband: Then should hee
Againe recouer sight, and clearly see

Obserue this yee water-casters and reserue the water of chastitie to cure your owne blindnesse.

Manie

Manie a womans water *Phar'o* tride:
And manie a chamber-pot to him was brought,
Yet still his sight was vnto him denid
Becauſe the female vrine helped nought:
Nor could his wife releaſe the wofull King
By the diſtilling vertue of her ſpring,
Long lay King *Phar'o* in great griefe and paine,
Deſpairing euer to haue ſight againe.

Vrinalls were not then in vſe

And, but that one at laſt of honeſt life,
Which after manie thouſands thither came,
And was approu'd a true and faithfull wife,
A modeſt matron, and a vertuous dame,
Reſtor'd his ſight by vertue of the fountaine, (taine;
Which bubbled purely from her bearing mou-
He yet had liu'd in darkeneſſe, and been blinde
For ſuch Phiſitions ſtill are hard to find.

Here may the reader 3. thinges chiefly gather,
What ſtore of hornes were extant by this matter; 1
How hardly then a child could know his father, 2
And what the vertue was of womens water. 3
The firſt many might challenge as their right;
The laſt had power to giue the blind their ſight;
And how could children know their fathers well,
When as their mothers truly could not tell.

Much could I wiſh that *Phar'o* were to trie
The vertue of this medicine once againe,
That we might ſee what faith and loialtie
In marriage liues doth at this day remaine.
Sure manie of them, which haue done amiſſe,
Would ſay they had the ſtone, & could not piſſe:
And manie which we iudge could not be blamed,
Then to make water would be much aſhamed.

Then

Then should you see some women, which make
Of pure behauiour, and great honestie, (showe
VVhich will not touch a man, for ought we know,
Nor once bee seene in prophane companie:
VVhich walke in little ruffes, and set their face
So simpringly, as if they still said grace:
Then should you see them by their vrihall
To bee found meerely hypocriticall.

Then should you see, how daintie and precise
Manie fine minions would be at this matter
Affirming that it could not helpe his eies,
To haue them washed in a womans water;
But that it was the superstitious tricke
Of some prophane, vngodlie Catholique,
Because within the Primitiue of yore,
They neuer read of such a thing before.

Then should you see some men, which doe deride
And scoffe at others wearing of the horne,
VVhen their owne wiues did come for to bee tride,
How they should be requited with like scorne,
Then manie women, which seeme coie and nice,
VVould be dissemblers found by this deuice:
So that if *Pharo* now releast would bee,
It would be long, ere he should clearly see.

Nath'les I will not bee too cynicall,
To condemne euerie woman for this fault,
Nor for a certaine number blemish all.
Each beggar is not lame, though [illegible] nault.
Nor euerie woman of so small compunction,
To violate her faith and holie function
For many women (doubtlesse) may be found
VVhich keep their plighted promise whole & sou

An

And God forbid, that wee ſhould all condemne,
Though all do taſte the tree of good and ill:
For in ſo great a number, ſome of them
Muſt needes bee honeſt (though againſt their will)
Some are for feare as modeſt as they may, (play:
And worldly ſhame which holdsthem from their
And ſome reſerue their loyalty vntainted,
Becauſe with Gallants they are not acquainted.

And ſome for want of more conuenient place,
And time,which for ſuch pleaſures are elected,
Preſerue themſelues from blemiſh and diſgrace;
Chiefely, becauſe they would not be ſuſpected:
And ſome for other idle vnknowne cauſe,
Obſerue a while their vowes and marriage lawes:
But very few of them, which to the laſt
For loue of honeſty continues chaſt.

Sometimes the golden prey doth make the theife,
And women yeeld for further maintenance:
Sometimes ſhort commons makes them ſeek releife:
And ſtubborne vſage and ſterne countenance,
Perforce conſtraine a woman now and than
To ſeeke for comfort of a kinder man; (married,
And ſometime want of heartes, when handes are
Is one great cauſe, that many haue miſcarried.

For 'tis not now as erſt in elder daies,
When marriage was contracted by affection,
For kindred now ſo much the matter ſwaies,
The parties haue ſmall choice in loues election;
But many times, ere one behold the other
An vnaduiſed match the friends do ſmother:
And howſoeuer they two can agree,
Their frends haue woo'd,& they muſt married be.

When they are wed, behold the ill ſucceſſe.
They liue like dogs and cats, in brawles and ſtrife,
Before they lou'd not: Now they fancy leſſe,
Shee hates her husband: hee abhorres his wife:
The diuels dance to ſee the iuſt confuſion,
Of enforſt marriage. And to make concluſion,
Hee growes a careleſſe vnthrift, bare and poore,
Shee turnes a ſhameleſſe and deteſted Whoore.

Thus many either for this laſt reſpect,
Or for the cauſes which I late recited,
May iuſtly for their knauery be ſuſpect,
And by the lawes of honeſty endited:
Where though that none doe giue in euidence,
Nor ſit as Iudge; but their owne conſcience:
Certaine it is, the moſt would guilty ſtand,
To be condemn'd to dye, or burnt i'th hand.

For either luſt, reuenge, or want of loue,
An vnkind husband, or deſire of gaine,
The tender hearts of woemen doth ſo moue,
(As old and new examples ſhew moſt plaine)
That few of them, if they haue fit occaſion,
Are able to withſtand a weake inuaſion:
For they are fraile, vnconſtant, apt to range,
Faire-fac'd, falſe-hearted, and by nature ſtrange.

Chaſt wiues are as the grapes, which we may ſee
To hang vpon the Vine; (the vintage paſt)
Or as the Apples, which are on a tree,
When bluſtering Autumne hath her pride defac't,
For ſuch a dearth of honeſty is tride,
Since *Patient Greſill*, and *True Conſtance* di'd,
That if a wife be honeſt; if once croſt,
It is almoſt as ſtrange, as the great froſt,

Here

Here could I cote a rabble of those wiues,
That you would wonder but to heare them nam'd,
Which whilome led such lewd dishonest liues,
That to remember them I am asham'd,
But that the multitude and mighty number,
Were good for nothing, but your eares to cũber:
Nor need we any proofes from graue be brought,
We haue too many liuing which are nought.

Nor will I here their other vices scanne,
Which more then to a million do amount:
Hee that would know them, may in *Mantuan*
See a great number more then I can count:
As enuy, scolding, swearing, lying, pride,
Dissembling, and a thousand faults beside,
Which I forbeare: because beyond my tex'
I would be loth those louing wormes to vex.

For they are creatures, which God made, to nurse
And comfort man; t'increase and multiply:
But first, for comfort they procur'd his curse,
And brought a woe to mans posterity:
Yet for th'increase which was of them required,
They often bring forth more then are desired:
Filling their husbands barnes with others corne,
As if to bargaine they were onely borne.

For instance of this truth, I can proclaime
Diuers examples which are worth the hearing:
To shew; that wiues, before they'l loose their game,
Will still be taking vp, and fall to bearing:
But that I feare I should to much offend them,
And yet, although I know it will not mend them,
One I'le produce; because I do not loue
T'affirme for truth, more then I well can proue.

Within the ſpatious bounds of fertile Kent, (ded)
(The Country, which for Long-tailes is commen-
VVhere the increaſe of Rabbets paies the rent,
And ſixe daies labour is in one day ſpended:
VVhether the Cittizens (when daies are faire)
Saile downe for pleaſures, and to take the aire:
T'eate plums and cheries: and about the Spring,
To heare the Nightingale and Cuckoe ſing,

There is a Towne; I liſt not tell the name
(Nor is the naming worth a *Grauеſ-end* Toſt)
Men of all Countries trauaile through the ſame,
And (if they money want) may kiſſe the poſt,
Engliſh, Italians, Turks, Moores, Spaniards, Germans,
Danes, Scots, French, Iriſh, Muſcouits, and *Normans,*
And new *Virgineans,* and of euery ſort, (ſhort.
Some white, ſome blacke, ſome long-men, & ſome

Som honeſt men, ſome fools, ſome knaues, ſome wiſe
Paſſe through this Towne, of all degrees at large,
Some thieues, ſome Tailors, which do ſtill deuiſe
New fooliſh faſhions to put men to charge.
Some Cittizens, ſome Cuckolds there ariues, (wiues:
Some queans, ſome Maids, ſom bawds, & ſome good
And through this Towne they trauel to the ferry,
To be conuai'd by Tilt-boate, or by VVherry.

It is the place as now I call to mind,
VVhere Marriners and their eſpouſed Mates,
Frollicke at farewell, while they ſtay for wind,
VVhich ſhould tranſport them ouer to the Straites,
It is the place whereas they kiſſe and part
VVith weeping eies, and with a heauy heart,
Forward he goes his voyage to entend,
Backe ſhee returnes to meete a ſecret freind.

VVithin

Within that Towne there whilom was an Inne,
Where man and horse at liuerie might stand,
There dwelt an Hostesse with a double chin,
A buxone wench, as any in the land:
She now was old and tough, yet in her youth
She was a morsell for a Parsons tooth;
Tender and faire, and plump; and with the rest
Courteous, and kind to welcome euery gueſt.

And therewithall well could she talke and chat,
And tell of faries, and doe other thinges
Her friend to pleasure. But what matter's that;
Her husbād knew not, where the shooe him wringes;
For though she was a wanton, she was wise,
And knew what times were fit to fall and rise;
And in her head this Prouerb still did carrie
Although thou be not chaste, yet be thou charie.

And (sure) I con her thanke and mickle praise
(Considering many of them doe step a wrie)
That she could line her shoes with vnder-laies
So cunningly, that few the fault did spie:
For since at Lodam they all loue to play,
And will play false, yet her commend I may,
That so can shift great Loaders from her hand,
No lookers on, nor gamesters vnderstand.

What with our eies wee see not in this case
We greeue not with our heart, (as people say)
Nor doth the Foreſter, which keepes a chase
(Vnles he see men beare his game away
Or by the bloud find where the Deare did fall)
Suppose he wanteth anie game at all:
For how can Warreners their conyes misse
Vnles they come, iust when the hunting is?

But though that marriage makes moſt husbands (blinde,
Or ells of one eye all of them depriues,
That what their left hand doth they cannot find,
Nor ſee the ſecret dealings of their wiues;
Yet had my ſubtile Hoſt ſome ſmall ſuſpition
My Hoſteſſe was too pliant of condition;
But they that Iunes and Ordinaries keepe
Muſt often ſee and winke, and wake and ſleep.

For, trauailers when they are in their Inne
Loue to be merrie, and to make good cheare:
How ere they ſwagger, it muſt be no ſinne,
The forehead of my Hoſt muſt ſtill be cleare,
And though they chance my Hoſteſſe for to kiſſe
My Hoſt muſt ſay, ther's nothing done amiſſe:
For they will pay like Kinges, for all they take
And I haue dowe (Gods plentie) for my cake.

For what care I? or wherein am I worſe
Though others tine their candles at my light?
Or though an other man doth vſe my purſe?
If ſtill my candle burne both faire and bright,
And that my purſe returne home without tearing,
With ſtore of monie, nothing worſe for wearing.
For this poſition I will euer hold
'Tis better wedde a Baggage, then a Scold,

Thus was mine Hoſt content to let his wife
Keepe companie, and wellcome euerie gueſt,
No fooliſh iealouſie did ſtir vp ſtrife,
Nor fond ſuſpition did their ſtate moleſt:
For ſhe was merrie, and did loue to play,
And with her mirth mine Hoſt could well away:
For though his wife did hault: hee knew as much,
That all his neighbours wiues did need a crutch.

But

But to go forward. Now they both were old,
And past the pleasures of their youthfull nature
One child they had, more deare to them then gold,
A prettie maid, iust of her mothers stature:
Like her in face, in person, and in fauour,
Like her in qualities, and in behauiour;
In all thinges like her mother, but in one,
Her name was *Kate*; her mothers name was *Ione*.

Her father lou'd her well, because he see
His wiues true image in his daughters face,
A forward Impe she was, and like to bee
A proper woman, (if she want not grace)
For to speake truth, and without partialitie,
She was endu'd with manie a prettie qualitie,
For she could sing most sweetly, dãce most finely
And on her virginalls shee plaied diuinely.

At vpper end of table, by her mother,
Dinner and supper, loue'y *Kate* did sit,
Whereby discoursing still with one or other
She grew to haue a prettie ready wit,
And could both iest, & taunt, to make a laughter,
That all men said shee was her mothers daughter,
And so she was; for you shall euer finde,
"*That crowes breed crowes. And cat will after kind.*

But time past on, and *Kate* was past a child,
And in the teenes about a yeare or two;
When nature, which can neuer be exil'd,
Made her conceiue, what she was borne to doe.
For now vaine lustes, and idle prouocations,
Stir'd vp her mind with loose imaginations,
And this conceit still in her fancie ran,
The chiefest pleasure was to know a man.

And

And now ſhee thought (good Lord) what happie
Haue women allwaies after they are wed? (liues
How pleaſantly and merrie liue thoſe wiues,
Which haue a man to comfort them a bed?
What fools are maids, to hold that thing ſo deare,
Which lets their ſports, & grieus thē for to beare?
This I reſolue, though yet I doe not marrie:
My maiden-head I will not longer carrie.

Thus courteous *Kate* decreed: and euen the beſt
(Oft times) about her yeares are ſo inclin'd:
For their virginitie doth ſo moleſt,
And is ſo great a burthen to their minde
That ſcarſe a maid (ſo ſoone as ſhe hath skill)
But keepes her maiden-head againſt her will.
And verie many of them I haue ſeene
For grief thereof grow ſicklie, and looke greene.

But *Kate* had vow'd that ſickneſſe to preuent,
And not to lead old grinning Apes in hell,
And therefore ſhe betimes to Phiſicke went
The cauſes of that maladie to quell.
And taſting of ſome drugges within a corner,
Which firſt were miniſtred by th' captain *Horner*,
She lik'd ſo well th' Apoticaries ſtuff,
That ſhe did thinke, ſhe nere ſhould haue enough.

This Captaine *Horner* ſometimes loued *Kate*,
And ſhe likewiſe good will to him did carrie:
But priuate quarrells ſtirring vp debate
Mine Hoſteſſe was vnwilling ſhe ſhould marrie:
And therefore he, for feare they ſhould him mock,
Gaue *Kate* her farewell with a priuate knocke:
Of which kind blow ſhe tooke ſo good a liking,
That al were welcome, which would fal to ſtriking.

Behold

Behold a womans vnrestrained thirst,
Her greedy appetite, and great desire:
After that she hath broke the hedge at first,
And tasted of the fruite which all require:
Her minde is so vnbounded without measure,
That she is neuer satisfied with pleasure,
But still (like to the graue) for more doth cry,
Or (like the horse-leach) which is euer dry.

In such a gaping ease was wanton *Kate*,
After that she had tasted of the potions,
VVhich Doctor Captaine *Horner* gaue her late,
To bridle and represse her youthfull motions:
For though she did desire to drinke before,
Yet now her thirst increased ten times more.
For after we haue found the sweete of sinne,
VVee worse refraine, then when we did beginne.

Thus *Kate* gaue bridle to her liberty,
And (when occasion serued) made not dainty,
For shee had put her selfe in ieopardy
To try the battell at the least with twenty:
And she was growne so skilfull in her play,
That very few went conquerors away:
But they that with so many haue about,
Shall sometimes haue the worst I make no doubt.

'Tis bad in sickenesse to haue diuers Doctors:
Their sundry medicines will but make thee worse:
In law 'tis foolish to fee many Proctors,
For some will harme thy cause and hurt thy purse:
So 'tis no wisedome in a wanton maide,
To vse her pleasures, as a common trade,
And make her pastimes like her occupation,
VVhich were inuented for her recreation.

So long the pitcher home doth water fetch,
That by ſome knocke it broken doth returne:
So long the flye doth at the candle cletch,
That in concluſion ſhee her wings doth burne:
So long a wench may Phyſicke vſe to take
To cure the griping of her belly-ake,
That ſhe may ſurfet in ſuch dangerous caſe,
As ſhe will be the worſe a twelue-months ſpace.

Thus it befell to *Kate*, that was ſo frolicke:
Her bucket now was broken at the well,
Shee now complain'd that ſhee had got the collicke,
And maruailed much to ſee her belly ſwell:
Her mother gaue her drinkes, and with a charme
Did clap the pot-lid to her belly warme,
To kill the wormes. But all her meanes are vaine,
They are no wormes that put her to ſuch paine.

Sometimes about the ſtomacke griefe ſhe feeles,
And ſometimes of her backe ſhee doth complaine,
Sometimes a quicke thing in her with two heeles,
She thinkes doth ſtirre, which maks her feare again e
She is with child: but yet ſhe doth not know,
For it may be her guts, that tumble ſo:
Or it may be with fatneſſe and with winde,
That ſhe growes big before, and broad behind.

But now ſhe did beginne to long for Cherries,
For Codlings, Peſcodes, and for Apple-pies:
And now ſhe faine would eate ſome Gooſeberries,
And euery thing which came before her eyes;
Or others told her of, or ſhe could name,
She ſtill deſired for to taſte the ſame:
So that the Mother ſeeing this effect,
Somewhat began her daughter to ſuſpect.

And

And one day taking *Katherine* aside,
Into the Parlour or some priuate place,
She gan to tell her that she had espide
Both by the change of coulour in her face,
And by her longing for so many things,
And by the griping, which her stomacke wrings,
That somewhat in her body was amisse;
And therefore, *Kate*, come tell me what it is.

Tell me (quoth she) and do not hide thy fault,
And if thou hast offended, let me know it,
'Tis hard before a Cripple for to halt:
For I perceiue, although thou wilt not shew it,
That thou hast bene too busy with a man,
And art with child; deny it if thou can:
Tell me, for though we cannot helpe the same,
Yet by preuention we may hide thy shame.

Kate, which knew well her Mother was too wise,
To be dissembled with in such a case,
Thought it was bootlesse for to blind her eies,
VVhich could discerne her folly by her face,
And therefore on her knees she fell before her,
And for remission did with teares implore her,
And since deniall could no comfort bring,
She plainely told her Mother euery thing.

And first she told her: how that Captaine *Horner*
Before he trauail'd to the New-found Land,
By chance did meete her in a secret corner,
And prest her for a souldier of his band:
And how that diuers other men of Armes,
Besieg'd her afterwards with fresh alarm's;
But who had blowne her vp, and made her swell,
Mother (quoth she) in truth I cannot tell.

Now *Benedicite*, her Mother said,
And hast thou bene already such a Twigger,
I durst haue sworne thou hadst bene yet a Maid,
And would'st haue bene so till thou hadst bin bigger.
Art thou begot with child, and can'st not gather,
Out of so many, one, to be the father?
Nor any but the Captaine can'st thou name,
Which long since went to sea? Now fy for shame.

With that she shooke her head and bent her brows,
As if she had bene angry; when behold;
Mine Host comes in, to whom mine Hostesse shewes
Their daughters sad mischance, (as hath bene told)
Which when hee heard; setting his cap aside.
He was so angry that he could not chide:
At last he said: And hath she plaid the whoore?
Fy on her, Baggage, turne her out of dore.

Mine Hostesse, seeing him to grow so hot,
Stept out, and spake to him with speeches milde,
Desiring him, although there were a blot,
He would remember that she was their childe:
And not to cast her off, for one fault past;
For neither is she first nor will be last,
Of good mens children (sure I thinke as shee)
That in their youth offend in this degree.

But husband (quoth she) 'tis no time to brawle:
Wee all haue faults, and need for to amend:
The deed is done, and wordes cannot recall
That which is past, nor bring it to an end:
Many that now seemes honest in their liues,
Haue done as much, before that they were wiues.
'Tis true (quoth he) But this is too too vilde,
She knowes not who is father to her childe.

If

If she could name the Sire, I did not care;
For by their marriage she might hide her shame.
Allthough he were a begger, poore and bare,
Or if he were a cripple, blind and lame,
Or whosoeuer, if she knew the father,
And could produce him, I could beare the rather:
But neither knowing him, nor his abiding,
This is a wonder worthie of deriding.

Lord (quoth mine Hostesse) what a coile you keepe!
Was neuer other woman so beguild?
Some I haue heard haue been conceiu'd a sleepe,
And neuer knew the Father of their child. (smother,
And some haue such good lucke their faults to
That they will lie with one, then wed an other.
And wonder not, because she hath miscarried,
For she's as good a maid, as most are married.

We all haue faultes: and 'tis a womans nature
To loue a man: She hath but done her kind,
For when that I was yong, about her stature,
I was vnto the sport as well inclin'd
As others were: for wee haue all been sinners,
And sometimes loue it better then our dinners,
But God forgiue vs all. Both we and you,
When we are yong, will doe as others doe.

Well (quoth mine Host) I tell thee once againe:
These thinges are not the point, whereon I stand;
Let me but know the man, which took the paine
To sowe his seed in her vnfallowed land,
And I am pleas'd; and will doe all I can
To haue her quickly married to that man.
Within her furrowes haue there plow'd so manie,
That for to reape the crop she knowes not anie?

And what of that? mine Hoſteſſe then repli'd:
Can it be holpen now with wordes or winde?
Fitter it were for vs to ſeeke to hide
Her ſhame, before the world the ſame doe finde,
Then like a paire of fooles to prate and chat
Vnto no purpoſe, of I know not what:
One man ſhe knowes; but he is ſuch a knaue,
With my conſent ſhe neuer ſhall him haue.

And who is he (repli'd mine Hoſt at laſt,)
For whom your liking doth no better ſtand?
'Tis Captaine *Horner*, which ſome 6. months paſt
(Quoth ſhe) went this way to the Newfound land.
But he's ſo great an vnthrift, that he would
Conſume this houſe, if it were full of gold:
And he's a Papiſt, and I wiſh her quicke
Laid vnder ground, then wed a Catholique.

Surely (quoth hee) 'tis ſtrange to ſee your minde,
That hee (whom in times paſt you did commend
To be an honeſt thriftie man, and kinde,
And who hath euer been our ſpeciall friend)
Should now ſo far be caſt out of your fauour:
That, though it fitteſt be that he ſhould haue her,
(All thinges conſider'd) yet you are ſo turned,
Before ſhe be his wife, you'd wiſh her burned.

But howſoeuer of the man you deeme,
Or what conceit is come into your minde,
I cannot tell; yet he to mee doth ſeeme,
(For I will ſpeake no worſe then I doe finde)
To be a ciuile gentleman of carriage,
And like to doe as well as ſhe in marriage:
And (by report) he hath a heauie purſe,
I pray to God, our daughter doe no worſe.

But 'tis no matter; once he would haue had her,
And then she must not looke on Captaine *Horner:*
Now she is puft, and blowne vp in the bladder,
And now there is no doubt, but he doth scorne her
And yet your anger is so furious still,
He shall not marrie her with your good will,
I thinke a woman is a spright infernall;
If once she hate, her malice is eternall.

It had been better that a chimny-sweeper
Had married her, if they two had affected,
Though we had after been compel'd to keepe her,
Then with this shamefull deed to be detected.
For by that meanes; though he were ne're so base,
She might haue lookt her neighbours in the face,
And now wee both may keepe her for our store,
And she shall euer bee esteem'd a whore.

Yet in my iudgement, the best remedie
That I can finde to couer her offence,
Is, that in hast wee send her priuily
Vnto our friends or kindred, far from hence,
Where for a season she shall make abode,
Vntill that she bee eased of her lode;
And after that the child is put to nurse,
She may returne, a maide no iot the worse.

There like a wife shall she herselfe attire,
And so shall blinde the Countrie with a wile:
Here we will say, if any doe enquire,
She's gone to soiourne with our freindes a while:
And when the child is bigger, and can runne,
We will maintaine it as our cozens sonne:
And 'tis no newes: for I haue knowne a dozen
Which kept their bastards, & did call them cozen.

But

But if the matter chance to be descri'd,
And that it be diuulged in the Towne,
Some honest place we will for her prouide
At *London*, where she shall remaine vnknowne;
And there (as Country-men doe vse to iest)
Shee'l be a Maid, as good as is the best;
For 'tis a vsuall practice and a wittie
To send vp broken vessels to the Cittie.

Old hats, old clokes, and other such old ware,
Bought at the second hand, and almost worne,
The Cittizens dresse vp, and tricke them faire
And sell them vnto Country-men in scorne:
Againe, the Country-men in lew of this
Send vp their wenches, that haue done amisse,
Crackt maides, grosse widdowes, and such broken
Are good enough to marrie Cittie-Guls. (Truls

For I haue knowne some wenches, that haue borne
Tow or 3. bastards (at the least) a peece,
So that they were derided, had in scorne,
And hooted at, as if they had been Geese;
And after all these mockes, and much a doe
Haue gone to *London* but a yeare or two, (Maides,
And there within short time haue prou'd good
And been well married vnto men of Trades.

Therefore this course is good, if you thinke fit,
For first abroade she shall be safe deliuered,
So that our neighbours shall not know of it,
And if her follie be at home discouered,
Then vnto *London* may she quickly wend
To take such fortune there, as God well send;
Yet if that I might rule the rost, much rather
I wish, that *Horner* might the bastard father.

That

That *Horner* might! replied mine Hostesse then,
I wonder why so much you talke of him:
In faith I could not loue him of all men,
He lookes so blacke, so rigorous and grim:
Besides, he hath no Trade to liue vpon,
Nor lands to keepe him, when the wars are done.
And there's an other thing, which I like worse,
All his wiues spending must come from his purse.

Oh, it will grieue a woman to the heart,
For euery farthing that she doth bestow,
To make account, how she did it impart,
So that her husband must of all things know:
For we haue many secret meanes to spend,
Which are not fit our husbands should intend:
For if that of them all they notice had,
The most of them(I feare)would run starke mad.

It is your Cittizen, which keeps his wife,
Gorgeous and gallant, with all prodigality:
Shee liues at pleasure; leads a merry life;
Sits in her shop with all formality:
He hath a mystery which seldome failes;
And she a great allowance by her vailes;
Her cob-web lawne, the altering of her wings,
Come from her vailes, with many other things.

And truely it is wonderfull to heare
How some of them will brag of their great vailes:
Boasting they gather 40 poundes by yeare,
From the pill'd scrapings of a few sheepes tailes:
And some from shreds, and hornes, and such like
Are able euery weeke to buy a ruffe: (stuffe:
That (sure) I thinke them in their hattes as good,
As Gentle-women in their veluet-hood.

Indeed the Gentle-woemen looke more high,
And of the Cittizens will take the wall;
Yet haue they but their penſion quarterly,
To keepe themſelues, and find their houſe withall:
If they want trifles, or would be more braue,
Out of houſe-keeping they muſt pinch and ſaue:
They haue their coaches, and great Vardingals;
But Tradeſmens wiues haue often better vailes.

And certainely, if I may haue my will,
A Cittizen ſhall marry her, or none,
And therefore if you haue no better skill,
Or care not whom ſhe haue: Let me alone;
I'le ſee, if I a husband can prouide
The child to father, and her ſhame to hide:
And though I know not whoſe it is by right,
It ſhould be father'd, ere it come to light.

Nor will I ſtand ingag'd to any friend,
To be a Maſque to couer our diſgrace:
Nor vnto *London* after ſhall ſhe wend,
To make her honeſter by ſhifting place:
For theſe are fooliſh ſhifts, & common meanes,
Practiſed by none, but ordinary Queanes, (hide,
And though a while theſe trickes their faults may
Yet at the length their ſhame will be deſcri'd.

No, this deuiſe too much in vſe is growne,
And will not hold out water to the laſt:
For 'tis no queſtion, but it will be knowne,
Then all our fat into the fire is caſt,
And ſhe vndone: For no man, but a Daſtard,
Will loue a woman, which hath borne a Baſtard;
Nor ſhall you finde a man, will wed a Whoore,
If he can learne that ſhe was ſo before.

And therefore, husband, take a fooles aduice,
And if you loue our credit, and her good,
Prouide a husband for her in a trice,
Before that her offence be vnderſtood:
You know ſhe is our onely child and heire;
And (though I ſay't) welfauored and faire;
And there are many yong men that do watch,
And would be glad to light on ſuch a match.

Firſt there is Maiſter *Peter* at the Bell,
A Linnin-draper and a wealthy man:
Then Maiſter *Thomas*, that doth ſtockings ſell:
And *George* the Grocer, at the Frying-pan:
And Maiſter *Tymothie* the Woollen-draper,
And Maiſter *Salomon*, the Leather-ſcraper:
And Maiſter *Franke* the Gold-ſmith at the Roſe:
And Maiſter *Phillip* with the fiery Noſe.

And Maiſter *Miles* the Mercer at the Harrow:
And Maiſter *Nick* the Silke-man at the Plow:
And Maiſter *Giles* the Salter at the Sparrow:
And Maiſter *Dicke* the Vintner at the Cow:
And *Harry* Haberdaſher at the Horne:
And *Oliuer* the Dier, at the Thorne:
And *Bernard* Barbor-ſurgeon, at the Fiddle:
And *Moſes* Merchantailor at the Needle.

And Maiſter *Hercules* the Iron-monger,
(Some ſay that he is worth 2000. pound) Of old Iron.
And Maiſter *Iames*, that ſels freſh Cod and Congerl.
And Maiſter *Roger* Scriuener at the Hand:
And Maiſter *Anthony* th'Apothecary:
All which would willingly our daughter marry;
With diuers others that I know beſide,
Which would be glad to haue her for their Bride.

All these are Cittizens, and well to liue:
The worst of them is worth 300 pound;
And with our daughter we as much will giue;
Then feare not, but a husband may be found:
For (sure) among so many we shall finde,
(Doubtlesse) some one or other for our mind,
And yet to choose one man before the rest,
Hercules. The Iron-monger I do fancy best.

For he is wealthy (and I crave no more)
And with our daughters loue is strong infected;
He hath made diuers motions heretofore,
Though hitherto he hath not bene respected:
Still he pursues his suite, and is her louer,
And he will fitly serue her fault to couer:
Therfore the next time that he doth come hither,
Let's knit the knot, and tye them fast together.

I see (replyed mine Host) it is no lie:
The yong Cocke after th'old Cocke learnes to crow:
Well may our daughter tread her shoes awry,
If like vnto her Mother she doth grow.
Yet since I heare that she hath done no more,
Then (almost) all the kind hath done before,
I am content to do what shall be fit:
Broche you the meate, and I will turne the spit.

Thus was the plot set downe and all agreed,
That Maister *Hercules* should be deceiu'd,
And that it should be brought to passe with speed,
Before it could be knowne shee was conceiu'd.
Behold yee Citizens what is concluded,
Whereby your simplenesse might be deluded!
Hereafter more aduisedly beware,
To set vp shop with such like broken ware.

Now

Now maister *Hercules*, that little knew
What subtile stratagems were lately plotted:
Whither it was, that Cuckolds lucke him drew:
(Which none can shun) or loue had him besotted,
I cannot at this present well discusse,
But in conclusion it did happen thus;
After 2. daies to Billinsgate he went,
And ouer-sea set forward into *Kent*.

The Tide that morning fell at fower a clocke,
Two howers at least, before the day did spring
Manie good morrowes had the chearefull Cocke
Chanted to Cuckolds, clapping with his wing:
Good morrow maister *Hercules* he cried:
Be stirring early, or you loose your Tide.
Take Tide in time. The Tide for none will stay.
Good morrow Cuckolds: Neighbors al good day.

Thus sang the Cock. But he more vigilant
Then is the Cocke, was watchfull like a Cat;
Which hauing found the hole, and vsuall hant
Of some delicious Mouse, or nimble Rat,
Still pries and peepes, and neuer can be quiet,
Listning and watching when she may espy it;
And though she winke, no rest her eies can finde
The Mouse doth runne so much within her minde.

Euen so lay maister *Hercules* that night,
Telling the clocke, and could not sleepe a winke
The loue of *Kate* did haunt him like a spright,
And still vpon his iourney he doth thinke.
No sooner had the clocke resounded three,
But from his bed he started suddenly;
And in his braue new suite leapt out of dores,
And ran to Billinsgate, and there tooke Ores.

Blacke gloomie cloudes did ouerspread the skie,
And foggie vapours did obscure the aire,
So that the Watermen could not descrie
(Almost) which way they should conduct their fare,
For such thicke mistes vpon the water fell
It was as darke as if it had been hell
But hee, to whom faire *Katerin* did giue light,
Would haue aduentured in a darker night.

For as that famous *Hercules* of old,
For his friends sake to *Pluto's* kingdome went:
Euen so this other *Hercules* the bold
For his faire *Kate* did ferrie into *Kent*,
And without Moone or Star his way to guide,
Couragiously sailed forward in great pride,
Dreading no dangers of the darkesome night,
No Oules, Hobgoblins, Ghosts, nor water-spright

For loue did make him bold and valiant,
Fearelesse of *Neptune*, and his Trident Mace:
No cloudes, nor mistie darkenesse could him dant,
Nor stormes, nor tempestes, make him turne his face.
But though it was so darke, they could not see
Before their bote, aboue two yardes or three,
Yet forward with great courage did he flote,
And sung this dittie, sitting in the bote

Fortune my foe, why doest thou frowne this night?
Yee lowring heauens, why doe yee looke so darke?
Though neither Moone nor Stars doe giue vs light;
Yet little *Cupid* doth conduct our barke.
And he will bring mee where my true-loue is,
That face to face we may confer and kisse:
For as the Moone amongst the Stars doth shine,
So 'mongst all Maides doth beauteous *Katherine*.

Thou

Thou little God, that with thy golden arrowe
Didſt wound my heart, and mad'ſt my bellie rumble,
Giue me the courage of a yong Cocke-ſparrowe,
That pretious *Kate* with valour I may tumble.
Oh that my wordes may be ſo eloquent,
That I may tickle her with complement!
Oh peirce her (pretie *Cupid*) with thy ſting,
That I may pricke her with another thinge.

My louelie *Kate*, which ſleepeſt at thy eaſe,
And doeſt not dreame, that I to thee come ſliding,
Would I were partner with the skipping fleas
Which in thy bed with thee haue their abiding:
I would not bite thee in that grieuous ſort,
But hip and skip, and kiſſe, to make thee ſport.
For as the pricklings of the roſe bring pleaſure;
So ſhould my ticklinges be eſteem'd a treaſure.

Yeebold Corriualls, which doe loue my *Kate*,
Leaue of your wooing, and giue mee the way,
My valiant heart in loue admits no mate,
Before I looſe her, I will kill and ſlay.
For as the mightie *Hercules* ran mad,
And for a woman loſt the wits he had:
So If I haue her not, I greatly feare,
I ſhall run mad, or elſe goe verie neere.

Thus did he ſing: and further would haue chanted,
But that a ſuddain feare his note did ſtay,
Stopping his voice, and ſo his ſpirits daunted,
That hee (poore man) could neither ſing nor ſay.
For iuſt againſt the leaueleſſe forked tree,
Which euerie paſſenger deſires to ſee,
Whereon the Armes of Cuckoldrie appeares,
There was he ducked ouer head and eares.

The

The reaſon was ; becauſe an other barke
Comming from Court at *Greenewich* with a fare,
And not deſcrying th' other in the darke,
Met them ſo ſtrongly ere they were aware,
That maiſter *Hercules* without a word
Was caſt to fiſh for Salmons ouer bord;
And both his Mariners cloſe at his heeles
Did followe him for Lampries, and for Eeles.

The other bote far better fortune had,
And with a little ſtaggering kept her head,
But maiſter *Hercules*, whoſe lucke was bad,
Sunke to the bottom, like a lumpe of lead;
Yet there perceiuing, ere he further went,
It would not be the readie way to *Kent*,
With hands and feet he daſhed and he waued,
And like a ruſhing Porpoiſe him behaued.

Vpward he heau'd his bodie from the ground,
And plung'd as proudly as a water-dog:
Loth was he at that preſent to be drownd,
Though he could ſwimme no more then can a log.
For life is ſweet, and he would gladly ſaue it,
Nor would it looſe, ſo long as he can haue it:
And therefore 'tis no meruaile if he ſtriue
With all his might to keepe himſelfe aliue.

He ſtrikes the water, and would gladly ſwimme;
But there was one thing did his ſwimming let:
His head was heauie, and did trouble him,
And out of water that he could not get.
And therefore now he greatly gan to feare,
That without doubt he ſhould be drowned there,
And (ſure) except ſome lucky chance betide,
An other father *Katherine* muſt prouide

For

For Maiſter *Hercules* was now growne faint,
And now his breath no longer could containe,
And now in heart he ſigh'd, and made complaint,
That he ſhould neuer ſee his loue againe:
Yet here behold! when he was moſt in doubt,
Deſpairing euer that he ſhould get out,
Then was his ſuccour neareſt to his hand,
To ſaue his life and bring him to the Land.

O valiant *Hercules*, thou Champion bold,
Couragious ſuiter vnto louely *Kate*,
Feare not (braue man) but quickly take faſt hold;
Good fortune at thy elbow doth awaite:
Put vp thy hand and apprehend that Oare,
Which for thy ſuccour houers thee before:
Dread not that death can deſteny withſtand,
At Cuckolds-Hauen thou ſhalt quickly land.

A happy Oare did happen then to ſwimme,
Vnto the place where *Hercules* did diue,
Which was a meanes moſt fortunate to him
His preſeruation thereby to contriue:
For as he plunged in that pitteous plight,
His handes by chance vpon the Oare did light:
Which he held faſt and lifting vp his head,
Helpe friendes (he cride) or elſe I am but dead.

The other Boate, which was not farre away,
Hearing him call, drew to him by the ſound,
And finding him at laſt in that array,
Much like a Rat that had bene almoſt drown'd,
They lift him vp, and on his feete him reared,
Which lookt as though he had ben lately feared,
Or rather like the picture of a Ghoſt,
Pale, ſpeachleſſe, ſtaring, ſtanding like a poſt.

His limbes for cold did quake; his teeth did clatter
And from the dropping Ciſternes of his breech
Downe both his trembling legs ran forth the water,
And he for feare was almoſt void of ſpeech:
But comming to himſelfe and there eſpying,
That his apparell ſtood in need of drying,
And that his ioints were ſtiffe, and wanted fire,
To be conuaide to ſhore he did deſire.

Angry he was in minde ſo to be wet,
And therefore thought at firſt with them to brawle;
He ſaw thoſe were the men that had them met,
And in the water ouerthrowne them all:
But when he did conſider in the end,
That quarrels would not this miſchance amend,
He wiſely them intreated in good ſort,
That to ſome Hauen they would him tranſport.

Not farre from thence there was a landing place,
Cuckolds-Hauen. A Port of great report throughout our Nation,
Which latter times haue branded with diſgrace,
With termes of ſlander, ſhame and deteſtation;
Though heretofore it was a place of reſt,
Where married men were fortunate and bleſt,
And where the Horne-aboundant did beſtow,
Riches and honour both to high and low.

There whilome did a famous Temple ſtand,
To Lady Fortune ſometimes dedicate,
Where all the horned perſons of the Land,
Did once a yeare conuene to celebrate;
But chiefly Cittizens; vpon whoſe Crowne,
Fortune her bleſſings moſt did tumble downe:
And in whoſe eares (as all the world doth know)
The Horne of great Aboundance ſtill doth blow.

Within

Within this Church an image was erected,
Which did the Lady Fortune repreſent,
Crowned with mighty Hornes, to be reſpected,
For worth, for beauty, and for ornament:
All guilded and beſet with pretious ſtones,
Which far were fetch beyond the burning Zones:
So bright with theſe fair ſton's the horns did flame,
That none but married men could ſee the ſame.

Within her lap whole bundles their did lie,
Of earthly bleſſings, and terreſtriall ioyes;
VVealth, honour, pride, acquaintance, vanity,
VViues, weddings, night-caps, and a thouſand toies;
All which in ſuch aboundance ſhe did caſt,
(But chiefly on the Citizens) ſo faſt,
That with the weight, ſo ponderous and ſo great,
Many of them about the browes did ſweate.

VVith one of her faire hands ſhe marriage made,
And coupled two together, man and wife;
VVith th'other hand a paire of hornes ſhe laid
Vpon the husbands head for all his life:
Then all the bleſſings, which her placket filled,
She ſeem'd to ſhake, and on his head diſtilled,
The reaſon was (obſerue it now and then)
That Cuckolds often are the wealthieſt men.

A horned Altar ſtood before her face,
Old dotards here which mary youthfull wiues;
And all old woemen, void of wit and grace,
Depriu'd of ſhame, and weary of their liues:
VVhich wed yong boies, had wont to ſacrifice,
For fortunes fauour at their enterpriſe:
On whom by right ſhe alwaies did beſtow,
Helmets of hornes, to beare off euery blow.

And at this Shrine did offer of each sort:
All those, which hauing spent abroade their stocke,
At home haue nothing to renew the sport,
But by their wiues lie senceleſſe, like a blocke,
They and their wiues did here both offrings make,
And each receiued hornes for th'others sake:
For try who will: The prouerbe still doth threate,
who strikes with sword, the scabbard shall him beat.

And here did offer many a sapleſſe Sot,
VVhose frigid nature, wanting moisture due,
Made his wiues tillage proue a barren plot,
Till fortunes hand with hornes did him endue:
Bnt after that his offering here was made,
The fruitleſſe soile, which was for barren laid,
VVithout his husbandry or helping hand,
Oft prou'd more fertile, then he would demand.

This place was famous, and of great report,
Vntill *Wat Tyler* (as some bookes haue said)
VVith all the rabble of the *Kentish* sort,
Hauocke and spoile through all the country made.
Then was this stately Temple ouerthrowne;
The Image and the Altar cast quite downe;
All things defac't, and topsie-turuy turned,
Fortune disgrac't, and all her horns were burned.

Thus Fortunes Temple fell: for what can stand,
Against so wilfull, and so wild a crue?
VVhere loue, nor faith, nor fortune can command,
Nor care, nor feare of dangers that ensue:
But Fortune, angry this great spoile to see,
And sore incensed with this iniury
VVith such reuenge the rascall Rebels followes,
That most of thē she made to climb the gallowes.

The

ſhe reſt, which by remiſſion of the King
Eſcap'd the halter and the fatall Tree,
She likewiſe plagued with another thing
(Foule ſhame to them and their poſteritie)
For from their backe-partes neere about their
Did ſpring a lothſome & deformed lumpe, (rump
Couer'd with haire; which growing pẽdent down,
Shew'd like the taile of Munckie or Babowne.

Thus was that raſh and rebell crew of *Kent*
Plagued with tailes of wondrous admiration,
And ſo continued downe-ward by deſcent
From man to man, by many a generation,
And though they curtail'd them, or did them pare,
It could not helpe: They grew againe as faire.
And hereupon a long time to their ſhame
They and their race of long-tailes had the name:

Long time thoſe long-tailes did remaine in *Kent*,
Aſhamed of themſelues; and monſters deemed,
And no deuiſe could finde for to preuent,
And rid their tailes that ſo deformed ſeemed.
But ſtill the more they laboured to auoid them,
The longer ſtill they grew, and more annoid them:
Vntill a man of Art by skill did find
The meanes to cure their maladie behind.

Who ſitting one day in his priuate cell,
Caſting an eye vpon his *Kentish* taile,
With incantations of a Magick-ſpell,
Able to make great *Rhadamanthus* quaile,
He coniur'd vp a ſpirit; and charge'd him tell
The firſt occaſion, how this ſhame befell,
And by what meanes they might the ſame eſcape,
And bring their buttockes to their ancient ſhape.

The fiend repli'd I can thee plainly tell
This shame attendes you for your sires offence:
For when in former times they did rebell,
They Fortunes Image vs'd with violence,
Defac'd her famous Temple, and in scorne
Consum'd with fier her guilded Crowne of Horne;
Whereat displeas'd for them and for their seed
Fortune this punishment of Tailes decreed.

If therefore from the ignominious staine
Of long-tail'd *Kentishmen* you would be free:
Endeuour fortunes fauour to regaine,
That she may cure your great deformitie:
And for her Image, which was erst deiected,
Let some faire Monument be there erected,
That your submission may with her preuaile
To the consumption of each *Kentish* taile.

Hereat the spirit vanisht out of sight,
And left the Inchanter musing: which with speed
Assembled all the long-tailes, that there might
By wisedome and aduisement be decreed,
What Image, portrature, or Monument
Were for this purpose most conuenient
To pacifie the Goddesse, and redresse
Their beastlie back-partes, and vncomelinesse.

At *Canterburie* met this congregation
From euerie Towne and village within *Kent*:
Where after much ingenious consultation
It was at last concluded by consent,
That on the fertile bankes of that faire floud
Where fortunes famous Image whilom stood,
An horned Piller there they would exalt
T' appease the Goddesse for their fathers falt.

And,

And, that it might be done with more reſpect,
And fortunes greater honour; they decree,
That at the time, when this ſhould take effect,
Great ſtore of *Kentiſhmen* in their degree,
Knightes, gentlemen and yeomen, of the beſt,
Of common people, ſhould be readie dreſt,
In all their braue accoutrements, to grace
The forked Piller to the foreſaid place.

The 18. of October was proclaim'd *Saint Lukes day.*
To be the day of this great celebration.
Againſt which time, each longtaile before nam'd,
Made much prouiſion and great preparation,
And vnto *Canterburie* tooke their way,
There to be readie at th' appointed day,
To giue attendance in moſt ſumptuous manner
On fortunes Piller with all pompe and honour.

Now was the inſtant come to play this prize,
The day of good Saint *Luke*; which was of old
The time, when men were wont to ſacrifice
At fortunes Temple, (as before was told)
Choſen the rather, that their Preſent might
Better reſpected be in Fortunes ſight:
And that ſhe might behold with what deſire
They were conform'd to pacifie her ire.

And now the long-tailes in their beſt array,
Preuenting the Sun-riſing by their haſt,
Aſſembled were, before the dawning day.
Had nights blacke curtaines from the skie diſploſt.
The thundring drums did rattle through the towne,
To ſummon euery gentleman and Clowne:
All which no ſooner heard that lowd Alar'me,
But like to Bees together they did ſwarme.

When

When loe! a glorious Post you might behold,
Fairer then any stake in Grayes-Inne feild,
Or the large pastures of Saint *Georges* hold,
Or *Finsburie*, or *Islington* can yeild,
Which in a cart (as theeues to hanging ride)
Are thither brought by Archers in great pride,
Guarded with gunners, bilmen, and a rout
Of Bowmen bold, which at a cat doe shoot.

Forgiue mee, Fortune, that I doe compare
Those painted postes with thy renowned Piller;
Those gaudie stakes, which for no purpose are,
But rouing markes for Longbows and for Tiller:
For euen so much for beautie, worth and glosse,
As Crosse in Cheape excels old Charing-Crosse:
So much and ten times more this peereleſſe stake
Exceeds those Postes, which Archers vse to make.

For not with in a Carmans durtie Cart
(As if it weare to Tiburne) was it laid;
Nor plaisterd ouer with the Painters Art,
Which with a shower of raine is seene to fade:
Nor on the top a Cat-Amount was framed,
Or som wilde beast, which nere before was tamed,
Made at the charges of some Archers stout,
To haue his name canonized in the clout.

Vpon a chariot was this Piller mounted,
(A chariot framed of the pureſt Horne,)
Whose workmanship here cannot be recounted,
It was so curious, fine, on foure wheles borne:
Two Gotes first drew this chariot, then 2. Rams,
Two Vincornes then followed, tame as Lambes.
Lastly 2. sober Oxen with slowe pace
Held vp the chariots head with horned face.

The

The piller was of wood, all guilded faire,
Beſet (like pretious ſtones) with ſtuddes of horne:
Vpon the top did ſtand a goodly paire,
Fairer then any Cukold erſt hath worne:
From whence two liuely trees did ſeeme to grow
Bearing all ſorts of fruit: to make vs know,
That howſoeuer fooles their fortune ſcorne,
Profit and pleaſure both ſpring from the Horne.

Now drums and trumpets fill the aire with thunder;
When firſt the chariot gan to moue her wheeles:
Now Canons and Caleeuers ſeem'd to thunder,
Then ſhoutes and clamour followed at the heeles:
The Clergy firſt before the Coach did ſing;
The Waites did play & all the bels did ring,
Bag-pips plai'd horn-pips, ſom did dance the Mor-(ris,
Some wind their horns, & ſom with cornets floriſh

Before the Chariot all the married went,
According to their place and due degree:
Behind it all the Batchelours of *Kent*;
Marched in order very gallantly:
Beſide all theſe ſo great a troupe, and throng,
Did fill the paſſage as they went along,
That many were ſore thruſt and wanted breath,
And ſome were crowded hard, but not to death.

For as you ſee vpon that ſolemne day,
When as the Pageants through Chepe-ſide are car-(ried,
What multitudes of people thither ſway,
Thruſting ſo hard, that many haue miſcaried.
If then you marke when as the fire-workes flye,
And Elephants and Vnicornes paſſe by,
How mighty and tumultuous is that preſſe,
Such were thoſe throngings, and no iot the leſſe.

But notwithſtanding all this grieuous thruſt,
Forward they march in decent ranke and faſhion:
Some, leaſt their tailes ſhould daggle in the duſt,
Had men to beare them vp with oſtentation:
But they which wanted men their tailes to guide,
Faſt round about their middles had them ti'de,
Or elſe about their neckes. For (without faile)
The leaſt was longer then an Oxes taile.

Many of them (the better to expreſſe,
Their willing mindes Dame Fortune to appeaſe,
That ſhe might ſooner cut their long-tailes leſſe,
And curtaile their great rumps to giue them eaſe)
In comely ſort their foreheads did adorne,
With goodly coronets of hardy-horne:
As Siluan Satyrs in old time were ſeene,
VVhen as they danced Horn-pipes on the greene:

It were too long to ſet downe enery thing,
VVhich chanced in that progreſſe as they went,
How all the bels in *Feuerſham* did ring,
In *Sitting-borne*, and other townes of *Kent*:
VVhat intertainement and preceſſion was
Ordain'd, whē they through *Rocheſter* ſhold paſſe.
And how each Officer in his beſt gowne,
Stood ready to conduct them through the Town.

Nor is it for our purpoſe to decide,
The hearty welcome giuen at *Grauеſ-end*;
How many Cittizens came downe that tide
VVith their ſweet wiues, the ſhew there to attend:
And how at *Dartford* the tall Sea-marke rod
His ſtately top and wethercocke did nod;
To bid her welcome; ſince our end is moſt,
At Cuckolds-Hauen to erect the Poſt.

VVhere

VVhere being new arriu'd: A mighty crue
Of wealthy Cittizens did them confront,
Come from the Citty, that faire poſt to veiwe,
And all the goodly hornes which were vpon't.
VVhich howſoeuer they deſirous be,
Abroad to range ſtrange faſhions for to ſee;
Yet ſure for this to range they haue ſmall neede,
They may abide at home, and better ſpeed.

There had the Cittizens large tables ſet,
Loaden with ſtore of victuals and good cheare,
To gratulate the Long-tailes, which they met,
And ſhew the loue which to the Horne they beare:
VVhereafter they had fed in bounteous manner,
And drunk a thouſand healths to Fortuns honor,
Towards the Thames they drew the horned Poſt,
And there did plant it ſtrongly on the Coaſt.

Iuſt in the place where Fortunes Temple ſtood,
There ſtands the forked Piller, ſtout and tall,
VVhoſe leaueleſſe boughes are neuer ſeene to bud,
Though much ſtone-fruit do from the branches fall.
VVeſtward it threatens, and with armes all bare,
Giues warning to the Citty to beware:
Like to a flaming Beacon, which ſtill ſhewes,
The neere approaching of ſome dangerous foes.

Thus was this famous Monument extoll'd,
And on the fruitfull bankes of Thames erected:
VVhich when the Goddeſſe Fortune did behold,
Perceiuing how deuout they her reſpected:
Her anger vaniſht, and with gracious eye,
She tooke compaſſion on their malady,
And all their rumpes, ſo infamous before,
Vnto their priſtine beauty did reſtore.

Thus came their Buttockes to their ancient hue,
Their tailes fell off, and on the ground did lie,
When loe! a wondrous matter did enſue,
A miracle, moſt ſtrange to euery eie:
For on a ſuddaine all their tailes vp ſtood,
Tooke roote within the ground, and 'gan to bud;
And into willow trees, which there are ſeene,
Were thē trāsform'd, moſt fragrāt, ſweet, & green.

VVhich when the *Kentiſh-men* at firſt beheld,
Feeling their hanches lighter then they were,
VVith ſhootes and ioyfull cries ſo long they yel'd,
That many vnto *Douer* did them heare.
And London-bridge with *Cæſars* Tower did ſhake.
By reaſon of the noiſe which they did make.
But Charing-croſſe fell downe (as *Stow* doth ſay)
And broke his necke, as may bee ſeene this day.

But that this ſtrange and great deliuerance,
From ſuch huge long-tailes, as they had of late,
Might ſtill be had in freſh remembrance:
That day to Fortune they did dedicate:
Enacting; that for euer once a yeare,
On S. *Lukes* day they ſhould aſſemble there,
To feaſt and frollicke on theſe pleaſant bankes,
And giue to Fortune her deſerued thankes.

Long time this ſolemne cuſtome was obſeru'd,
And *Kentiſh-men* with others met to feaſt,
But latter times are from old faſhions ſweru'd,
And growne repugnant to this good beheaſt:
For now vngratefull men theſe meetings ſcorne,
And thankeleſſe proue to Fortune and the horne:
For onely now is kept a poore Gooſe Faire,
VVhere none but meaner people do repaire.

But whilſt it was obſerued: did befall
A certaine matter worthy obſeruation,
For ſome wilde Colts (which Cittizens we call)
And when they are abroad it is their faſhion,
Being all fluſtred, in their merry mood
'Pull'd down the Poſt, & threw the horns i'th flood
But marke a wondrous thing! The horns next Tide
To land aboue the Bridge were all deſcride.

The *Kentiſh-men* at their next Congregation
Seeing the Poſt to be purloin'd away,
T'erect another made a conſultation,
As like vnto the former as they may:
Which was no ſooner vp: but ſome againe,
Which had ſinal cauſe for want of horns to plain,
Stole them away: And thus from time to time,
They were abuſed with the fore-ſaid crime.

Which thing when that theſe curtail'd men eſpide:
With certaine *London* Butchers they agreed,
That they ſufficient hornes ſhould ſtill prouide,
For to repaire the Poſt when it ſhould need:
And for reward the neighbouring fields ſhould be
Theirs and their heires to hold eternally:
Prouided ſtill, that hornes did neuer want,
For then they made a forfeit of their grant.

Thus is the Poſt repair'd, and Fortunes Port,
Since Citizens firſt tooke their Hornes away,
(Whether it be in earneſt or in ſport)
Is nicke-nam'd Cuckolds-Hauen to this day:
And at this place as you ſhall vnderſtand,
Was Maiſter *Hercules* conuai'd to Land:
An ominous preſage (without all doubt)
Of future lucke, and what he went about.

The watermen, which tumbled in with him,
Were in the meane time gotten to the ſhore:
For they by happie fortune both could ſwim,
Being inſtructed in that Art before.
Their bote and euerie thing the others ſought,
And vnto land with *Hercules* them brought
Onely his hat was miſt, which was ſmall harme
His Horn-wroght-cap wold keep his nodle warm.

They were no ſooner on the bankes arriu'd,
But preſently new troubles did begin.
The ſtubborne watermen of wit depriu'd
Fell at debate about their falling in,
And firſt with bitter termes of foule diſgrace
Each one reuil'd an other to his face:
And afterward, to recompence their mockes.
They fell frō words to blowes & boiſtrous knocks.

Which when ſtout-hearted *Hercules* beheld,
(Being vnwilling to be beaten drie)
He tooke his heeles, and ran into the feild
To ſhun the dangers of this mutiny;
Where by the glimmering of a candle bright,
Vpon a little cottage he did light:
Whither he went, and entrance did deſire
To drie his dropping garmentes by the fire.

Which when the maiſter of the houſe did heare,
And looking forth did ſee that miſer wight,
Which (like a drowned mouſe) ſtood dropping
He was much moued at that pittious plight; (there
And firſt into his cottage him admitted,
And after bid him wellcome, as befitted,
And made a fire, enough to roſt a bull,
And gaue him Ale and Toſt his bellie full.

The

The watermen, which lately were at iar,
(Seing the lookers on to giue them way,
And not once offer for to end their warre)
Did wiſely of themſelues conclude the fray,
And after that they found their buffets ſmarted
From blowes they fell to wordes, and ſo departed,
Curſing each other with reproches vile,
After they were aſunder halfe a mile.

And now our mariners no ſooner were
Freed from thoſe dangers: and all tumultes paſt;
But that incontinent a ſudden feare
A freſh inuaded them, and much agaſt.
For *Hercules* they miſt, and ſought about,
Yet by their ſeeking could not finde him out,
Then did they call alowd, but all in vaine,
Which makes them feare, he is fall'n in againe.

Neere to the ſhore they ſearched with their bote,
But no where by their groping could him finde:
His hat they found which fairely there did flote,
With treble Sypers, and with veluet lin'd.
But miſſing him, they rowd againe to land,
More happie tidinges there to vnderſtand
Whither arriu'd, The dawncing day did ſhewe
The little cottage ſituate belowe.

Vnto that little houſe forthwith they ran,
And for halfe-drowned *Hercules* enquire;
When they beheld that lamentable man
In drouping manner drying his attire.
Sadly he lookt, and ſorrily did ſit,
As if he ſcarce recouered had his wit,
But when he ſaw the watermen arriu'd,
His fainting ſpirits ſomewhat were reviu'd.

Glad

Glad were they to behold each other there,
And 'gan diſcourſe of their fore-paſſed dangers:
But maiſter *Hercules*, now void of feare,
Did chafe, and fret, and threat, & curſe the ſtrangers,
And, like a Lyon raging for his prey,
Did ſweare reuenge, if they came in his way.
For to a yong man fals no greater loſſe,
Then in his wooing time to haue a Croſſe.

The watermen, his wrath to pacifie,
Gaue him faire wordes, and 'gan for to relate
How valiantly they made their foes to flie,
And how they ſoundly knockt them on the pate.
But ſince (quoth they) all dangers now are paſt,
And we are ſafely here arriu'd at laſt,
Let's drinke downe ſorrow, & the day here ſpend,
And at next Ebbe wee'l ferrie to *Grauеſend*.

With this was maſter *Hercules* content,
And there that day to tarrie he decreed,
(For when we cannot chooſe, we muſt conſent)
His clothes were wet, and he could not proceed.
For both his health, the time, & his good fortune
To wooe in drie apparrell did importune:
And homeward to returne he was vnwilling,
There to be mockt. Twere better ſpend a ſhilling.

There all that day, and allmoſt all the night,
(Too tedious vnto *Hercules*) they ſtay'd:
Where how they ſpent the time, recount I might,
But that to trouble you I am afray'd.
Therefore of purpoſe (as I thinke moſt fit)
Thoſe circumſtances I will here omit;
Becauſe (for breuitie) I moſt intend
To haue them quickly landed at *Grauеſend*.

And

And now conceiue them in their boate againe,
Their garments dry, and they faire shipt for *Kent:*
And now so swift they furrow downe the maine,
As if an arrow from a long-bow went:
And now imagine they haue sail'd so fast,
That at *Grauesend* they are arriu'd at last.
And now becauſe wee'l not be long a doing,
Imagine *Hercules* is cloſe a woing.

Kate had her leſſon: and at firſt was coy,
Yet was ſhe coyly kind, and kindly nice:
Now lift him vp with hope her to enioy,
Now caſt him downe with doubts which did ariſe:
Shee ſaid, his faith and long perſeueration,
Had almoſt forc't her to commiſeration,
And that ſhe lou'd: but where our ſelues we are not
We often wiſh, when do the thing we dare not.

I do confeſſe I beare you ſome affection,
Although the ſame I yet durſt neuer ſhew:
For where the Parents will haue all election;
The children muſt be bended to their bow,
And therefore ſince their will muſt be my law,
Let me entreat your meaning to with-draw:
How happy are thoſe maids, whoſe fearleſſe voice
May of their husbands make their own free choice.

Both hope and feare in *Hercules* his face,
Were ſeene to combat: when he thus repli'd,
Let me enioy thy fauour and thy grace,
And I reſpect not all thy friends beſide:
For though they be vnwilling, and withſtand
To giue their full conſent to my demand,
Yet if to be my wife thou wilt agree,
Without their liking I will marry thee.

Pitty it were, your feruent loue (ſaid *Kate*)
Should want his merite and his due deſart,
And I could wiſh, if it were not too late,
To giue redreſſe to your deſtreſſed heart;
But that my Parents haue decreed it meeter,
To haue me married vnto Maiſter *Peter*:
The wealthy Linnin-Draper at the Bell,
Though I proteſt I loue you twice as well.

To Maiſter *Peter*? (quoth he) what am I, (better
That Shepeheards-holland ſhould bee thought my
It is my parents will (did *Kate* reply)
And they intend me to that log to fetter,
But bleſt were I, before our hands do meete,
If I were ſhrouded in my winding ſheete,
For ſure I am, although I do him marry,
True loue vnto him I ſhall neuer carry.

Hereat ſhe ſtaid and wept. He wip'd her eies,
And wept to ſee her weepe; and thus repli'd:
My deereſt loue, before the Sun doth riſe
Earely to morrow do thy ſelfe prouide,
And ſecretly to *London* with me wend,
Where of theſe matters I will make an end,
For I will wed thee firſt, and which is ſweeter,
I'le bed thee after in deſpight of *Peter*.

And let thy froward Parents fret their fill,
VVhich ſeeke to marry thee againſt thy minde:
If thou wilt grant me promiſe of good will,
And take the courſe which I haue now aſſign'd,
Though all thy friends diſpleaſure ſeeme to take,
And both thy parents do thee quite forſake:
Their frownes or fauours I do little ſtand on,
For I till death will neuer thee abandon.

Kate

Kate, which knew well, when as the Sun did ſhine
It was the fitteſt ſeaſon to make hay,
Did now thinke meete her Fortreſſe to reſigne:
Conſidering dangers iſſue from delay:
And therefore ſetting circumſtance aſide,
Becauſe his loue ſo faithfull ſhe had tride,
Shee was content next morning before day,
Sans fathers leaue to ſteale with him away.

Thus was this match confirm'd with many a kiſſe,
And they on all things fully were concluded:
VVhen loe! mine Hoſteſſe (ſeeming *Kate* to miſſe)
Into the roome forth-with her ſelfe intruded: (her
And call'd her forth, for much it ſeem'd to mooue
To ſee her talking ſecret with her Louer,
And therefore chiding *Kate* (as much offended:)
Away they went, and ſo the woing ended.

And now mine Hoſt, mine Hoſteſſe, & her daughter,
About theſe matters did in counſell ſit, (laughter)
VVhich when mine Hoſt did heare (ſurpris'd with
He much did praiſe their quicke and ready wit;
VVhich had ſo ſoone, and in ſuch ſubtile wiſe,
Contriu'd ſo fine and ſtrange an enterpriſe:
And by a ſtratageme ſo rare and witty,
Had caught a ſimple Cuckoe of the Citty.

But (briefly) there, without more conſultation,
It was enacted, by a full conſent
Before the cocke did chant his ſalutation,
Or lampes left burning in the firmament:
That *Kate* next morning ſhould herſelfe prouide
To meete her louer at the waters ſide:
Sad meeting vnto him, which muſt by lot
Father a child, the which he neuer got.

Time, which doth swiftly turne all things about,
Brought on the time for meeting destinate,
When *Hercules* came softly stealing out,
And at his heeles went creeping louely *Kate*,
Not daring almost breath (as he supposed)
For feare that her escape should be disclosed:
How happy art thou *Hercules* to finde,
A wench so truly constant, and so kind?

A boate was ready into which they enter,
Faire shipt for *London*, without winde or tide:
And like to *Iupiter* with his aduenter,
(When as *Europa* on his backe did ride)
So vp the Thames in triumph did he ferry,
Proud of his purchase, frollicke, blith, and merry:
And landing at the Tower, with liberall purse
Married they were for better, and for worse.

Thus is the Woodcocke fall'n into the gin,
And in Lobs-pound intangled by a wile:
Behold the fortune of a Cittizen,
That makes no conscience others to beguile!
In woing time here likewise vnderstand,
At Cuckolds-Hauen to be cast on land,
How ominous it is, and hard to flie.
The horned chance of forked destinie.

But this is for thy comfort (man of Trade)
Thou neither art the first, nor shalt be last,
Which hast a voyage in this manner made,
And bene on quicke-sands by mis-fortune cast:
For 'tis vncertaine to the most that wed,
Whether they haue a womans Maiden-head:
And 'tis as hard a matter to be knowne,
Whether they keep more children the their own.

Therefore

Therefore ye rurall and champestriall men,
Which liue in villages and Countrie Townes,
Doe not deride and mocke the Cittizen,
As if there were no Cuckolds among Clownes;
As though your maids were *Malkins*; & your wiues
Would carue no Codfish, wanting of your kniues,
For 'tis reported (greater is the pittie)
The Countrie partly imitates the Cittie.

I doe confesse, the Cittie may of due
Plead of the Hornes the more abundant share,
Chiefly by reason of the gallant crue,
Which there reside, and of their daintie fare,
Besides, Plaies, Pageants, and the tilting day,
May giue occasion for to run astray.
Againe, their beauties, and their braue attire
Are greater motiues to prouoke desire.

Nath'les I would not haue a rusticke Swaine
Condemne all Cittizens to be cornuted,
As the Countrie were deuoid of staine,
And that the Cittie were alone polluted;
For many Cittizens did neuer set
Their wiues in shoppes more Gustomers to get:
Though diuers wealthie farmers haue ben knowne
To keepe their Landlordes children as their owne.

The thriftie Cittizen with liues by Trade
Hath in a roome of two his wife confin'd,
So that the want of place hath often made
Some woemen honest, much against their minde.
She neuer walkes abrade, but either hee
Or his apprentice watch her narrowly;
So that by any meanes I cannot see
How euerie Tradesman should a Cuckold bee.

Whereas the Countrie forrests, woods, and feilds,
Groues, thickets, haiecockes, grasse, and standing
To such intentes more fit occasion yeildes (corne,
And greater libertie to graft the Horne.
And therefore howsoere the Cittie-Dame
For pride and beautie may deserue the name,
Yet Countrie *Marian* with her liuelie browne
Is oft as willing to be tumbled downe.

Therefore allthough much crazed broken wares
Are vented vnto Cittizens by chance;
Yet sure the Countrie people haue their shares,
And hand in hand with Cittizens may dance:
And this to be no fiction nor a lie
Their Teachers in white shetes can testifie:
So that I must conclude. Both Towne and Cittie
Haue store of Cuckolds, worthie, rich and wittie.

But now doth *Hercules* enioie his Bride,
And to his house with glorie doth her bring
God giue you ioy, his freindes & neighbours cride,
And send you comfort of your wedding ring.
Thus for a weeke in pleasures and delights
They feast on daies, and frollicke in the nights,
When loe! a sudden storme did ouerspread
The mirth and reuells of their marriage bed.

The Iouiall time of pastime and content,
Which married persons do in kissing spend,
Was scarce begun, when all their merriment
By meanes of forked fortune made an end.
And now their Hony-Moone, that late was cleare,
Did pale, obscure, and tenebrous appeare;
And thrusting forth her hornes, did plaine bewray,
That some are Cuckolds on their wedding day.

The

The reaſon of this ſudden diſcontent,
Which nipt ſo ſoone their pleaſures in the ſpring,
Was by occaſion of an accident,
A luckleſſe chance, and vnexpected thing,
That vnto maiſter *Hercules* befell,
Which made him thinke his head began to ſwell:
A ſudden Croſſe, which did ſo much him paine,
That now he wiſht to be vnwed againe.

They were not long conioyn'd in wedlocks band,
But that from them a Meſſinger was ſent
Vnto mine Hoſt, to let him vnderſtand
The wedding newes, and how all matters went:
Which when he heard; with wordes he *Kate* re-
Calling her graceleſſe, diſobedient child; (uil'd,
And ſince ſhe married, (all her friends vnwilling)
He ſwore frō thē ſhe neuer ſhould haue ſhilling.

This was ſome cauſe, why *Hercules* might grieue,
And of his haſtie marriage ſoone repent;
(The want of portion, with ſhould him relieue,
The lacke of Parents fauour and conſent)
The want of wealth for which ſome onely marrie
Might giue him cauſe with *Katherine* to varie:
But want of theſe, nor all theſe did moleſt him:
It was too much of one thing which oppreſt him.

Too much and more then he was glad to finde,
Too much and more then he ſo ſoone expected,
Did ſo with iealous thoughts diſturbe his minde,
That now his Bride by him was much ſuſpected.
For as one night he chanced to put ouer
His twining arme about his naked Louer,
'As married men are wont to doe in bed)
(With ſudden feare he was aſtoniſhed.

For-

For as he there her bodie did embrace,
Touching each tender and delicious limme,
Her breasts, her necke, her chin, her nose, her face,
So round, streight, prettie, beautifull, and trimme:
And finding those so pleasant to his touch,
Downeward he felt if lower partes were such,
But on her bellie when his hand was laid,
A quicke conceit his further searching staid.

A quicke conceit, or thing conceiued quicke,
Vnder his hand he deemed for to feele,
And now he thought that it did stir and kicke,
As if it were a creature with a heele.
But in the end he certainly concluded,
That in this hastie match he was deluded,
And that this stirring motion needes must be
A liuing child, and two-legd Timpanie.

And doe I liue? (thought he) or am I dead?
Or doe I sleepe? or doe I dreame awake?
Or doe I feele? or are my senses fled?
Or doth this stir? or doe I but mistake?
No sure, I liue, and waking haue perceiu'd,
That I doe feele, my wife is quicke conceiu'd;
That I doe truly feele and plainly finde
These stirring motions cannot come from winde.

And am I gul'd? and made a laughing stocke,
To haue my children gotten to my hand?
And had you none (sweete wife) but me to mocke?
Or do you thinke I cannot vnderstand?
Must I be baud vnto your base desire,
And cloak your whordome like an Apple-squire?
No, *Kate* you shall perceiue that I haue eies,
And can descerne your wiles and pollicies.

Herewith

Herewith his ſleeping wife he did awake,
And grauely to examine her begun
What thing is this which doth this ſtirring make,
And vp and downe thy bellie ſeemes to run?
Art thou with child? & couldſt thou find no other
To be thy ſtake, and make a yonger brother?
Or do'ſt thou thinke I am ſo ſoone beguild,
That I will patronize an others child?

Kate, with had long before theſe things debated,
Now of an anſwere was not to prouide,
Nor at his ſpeaches did ſhe ſeeme amated,
Neither to be conceiued ſhe denide.
For I confeſſe (quoth ſhe) I feele ſome thing
Within my bellie for to leape and ſpring,
Which if it be an infant, as I gather,
Here I will take mine othe, you are the father.

Shameleſſe and wicked woman, void of grace,
Do'ſt thou not bluſh (ſaid he) theſe wordes to giue?
Can it be true, that in ſo little ſpace
A child ſhould be begotten, moue, and liue?
Cert's if you proue ſo ſoone, and child ſo quickly,
We ſhall haue ſtore of children it is likely:
But 'tis ſo plaine, that I will pawne my life,
You were with child, before you were my wife.

And therefore early doe your ſelfe prouide,
And backe againe vnto your friends repaire:
For I will be no Gold-ſmith, for to hide,
And guild the outſide of your copper ware,
Nor will I be a marchant of retaile,
To ſet your broken marchandiſe to ſale
No, miſtris *Kate*; your counning is too ſhallowe,
I am not yet ſo blind ſuch flies to ſwallowe.

Kate was not daunted at his bosterous threats,
Nor of his mighty menaces affraid:
Neither for pardon at his hands entreats;
But boldly vnto *Hercules* she said:
Haue I (said she) vnfortunate, vnblest,
Against my Parents liking and behest,
Onely for loue (vnwisely) chosen thee,
Reiecting many better of degree?

And are you now so iealous without ground?
Or else growne weary of your wedding state?
Do you not know, when marriage once hath bound,
That afterwards repentance is too late?
Haue I cast off my friends at your petition?
And would you now diuorce me for suspition?
Making your selfe a by-word vnto men,
And laughing stocke to euery Cittizen.

VVell Mynion (answered he) I tell you plaine,
Ile not be bob'd with such a slight excuse:
You know, without a cause I do not plaine,
Nor will I pocket vp this vilde abuse.
For though till death the lawes of wedlocke bind,
Yet in this case I am not of your minde.
For if conditions be dissolu'd by you,
The forfeit of the bond, I'le stand vnto.

If I (said she) haue broke my plighted vow,
Or since the marriage gone one step awry,
Then vse the rigour which Law doth allow,
And of the forfeite take the penalty:
But from my promise since I haue not sweru'd,
But haue my faith inuiolate obseru'd,
I craue no fauour: Therefore do your worst,
It is your child, and you shall see it nurst.

And

And though my wrathfull Parents for your ſake,
Out of their loue and fauour haue me throwne,
Yet both of them I will acquainted make,
And preſently ſend for them to the Towne: (grieued
And though my fooliſh choice much hath them
VVhereby I might deſpaire to be relieued;
Yet ſince my honeſt name is at the ſtake,
I hope that now they will not me forſake.

Thus for that night the conference had end,
And careleſſe *Kate* fell quickly faſt a ſleepe:
But Maiſter *Hercules* the night did ſpend,
In troublous thoughts, which did him waking keep:
Sometimes he thought to put her quite away;
Sometimes ſuppos'd it fitter ſhe ſhould ſtay;
Sometimes to make it knowne he deemed beſt;
Sometimes much better that it were ſuppreſt.

For if he caſt her off, or make it knowne,
Though to her ſhare great ſcandall might betide,
Yet he perceiu'd the ſcorne would be his owne,
And that the world his folly would deride:
Or if he kept her, and the fault conceale,
(To ſhun reproaches in the common-weale)
Yet inwardly ſome griefe would ſtill be cleauing,
Becauſe that he muſt take anothers leauing,

And thus perplexed in his doubtfull mind,
Conſulting with himſelfe he lay all night,
Vntill the Roſie morning had aſſign'd,
The clouds of darkeneſſe to auoid the light:
VVhen from his bed ariſing preſently,
He went vnto a neighbour dwelling by,
His truſty friend, a Midwife by vocation,
Of great experience, and good eſtimation.

Full twentie yeres she had a widdowe been
Like to a Turtle mourning for her make,
Yet fat and plump she was for to be seen,
As if but little care she vs'd to take:
Manie a match and married copulation
Had been affected by her instigation.
True talkatiue she was, like all the rest,
And could tell bawdie tales, and breake a iest.

Some little skill she had in Surgerie,
And could redresse, and cure diseases hidden,
Which doe proceed from lust and surquedrie,
By tasting of those fruites with are forbidden,
By which occasion she was well acquainted
With diuers Cittizens that had been tainted,
And for this secret cause, or for some others
Was *Hercules* well knowne to this old mother.

Vnto this ghostlie Counsailor he came,
And all his grieuance let her vnderstand:
Desiring her, that to preuent the shame,
Which did attend his credit hard at hand,
She would aduise him in her pollicie,
What he should doe in this perplexitie:
And so the story of his woe he told
From point to point, as I did erst vnfold.

Which when old mother *Maribones* did heare,
Like to a sage and sober Ape she smiled,
And thus repli'd I wis, my neighbours deare
It is hard measure to be thus beguiled,
And (sure) it cannot chuse but vex your minde
Such quicke conception in your wife to find:
Nor truly (neighbour) can I much you blame,
If you be mou'd and angrie for the same.

But

But let me tell you; 'Tis no time to grieue,
Or raise tumultuous brawles about this thing
Iarring debate cannot your wrong relieue,
Nor anie helpe vnto your head-ache bring.
Rather with patience, and with quiet carriage,
Support the Crosses of your hastie marriage.
For since the Priest the wedding knot hath tide,
For better and for worse she is your Bride.

Keepe her you must with quietnes or strife,
And therefore make your choice of which you will
If she be true or false, she is your wife,
So is she likewise, be she good or ill.
If she be fat and rich, or leane and poore,
If Saint or Deuill, honest or a whore;
After the weddings sportfull celebration
It is too late to make a recantation.

To put her quite away for this her claime
In law and conscience you can haue no reason:
For since the fault was done before your time,
Cause of diuorce doth now come out of season,
Since therefore by no meanes you can forsake her,
But that with all her faults you needes must take her
'Tis rather for your credit to conceale it;
Then to your shame and infamie reueale it.

And yet I would not haue you so content,
Wholly to cloke and swallow this abuse;
Make shew of anger, wrath and discontent,
Neither allow of anie blind excuse:
Threaten diuorce, and if that beare no sway,
Priuately send her to her friends away.
And bodly let them know, that backe againe
You neuer meane your wife to entertaine.

Which when her Parents see, that still make showe
Of great displeasure at their daughters choice,
And neither will with portion her endowe
Nor with kind looke, nor comfortable voice.
When they behold their daughter in that case,
Turnd out of dores vnto her foule disgrace,
Though here tofore they haue been proud & stout,
Then shall you see them glad to seeke you out.

Then shall you see them humbly to you sue,
With faire entreaties, and much obsecration,
That her offence you would with pittie vewe,
And on their yeares take some commiseration,
And not to make them, and their onelie daughter,
The scornefull subiect of reproch and laughter.
Then will they promise much and giue you more,
If you will keepe her still and salue this sore.

And now, allthough at first you were vnwilling
Euer againe to take their daughter *Kate*;
Yet when you see your chestes and chambers filling,
With store of monie, household-stuffe and plate.
Then may you seeme by little to relent,
And (in your loue) her follie to lament,
And that you please (vpon her good behauiour)
At their requestes to take her into fauour

Thus shall you purchase both her Parents loue,
Obtaine great riches, and conceale your shame:
And this your kindnesse will your wife so moue,
(If she haue anie grace to weigh the same)
That she will proue so honest, kind, and chast,
And she will satisfie for all is past.
And all your friends which see her vertuous life,
Will blesse your fortune in so good a wife.

And

And though ſhe be big-bellied with a child,
That you are certaine cannot be your owne:
Let it not grieue you to be thus beguild,
(Conſidering that the matter is not knowne)
Neither refuſe to patronize the ſame,
And Chriſten it according to your name,
For manie wealthie Cittizens haue done it,
And either did not know, or could not ſhun it.

For better is your caſe then manie others,
Whoſe iealous mindes are ſtill oppreſt with feare,
Euer ſuſpecting when their wiues growe mothers,
They are not fathers to the babes they beare,
And ſtill ambiguous, that their wiues diſſemble,
If their yong infantes doe them not reſemble
Whereas you need not feare to be beguild,
For you are certaine it is not your child.

And though it be not yours, nor you can tell
What Cuckoe laid this egge within your neſt,
Imagine it is yours, and all is well.
For in imagination all doth reſt.
Manie a man is by his wife beguild,
And yet imagines he begot the child.
For whither children be your owne or no,
Imagination onely makes them ſo.

Your wife hath done amiſſe, and ſo haue manie
(For who offendes not, either ſoone or latter)
The moſt haue wanton motions: Neither can I
Excuſe my ſelfe, vnleſſe my ſelfe I flatter,
But when that I was yong, I was enclin'd,
As other merrie wenches are by kind,
For this is all the difference can be ſpide
She is leaſt faultie, that can faults beſt hide.

Then

Then since she is but like your neighbours wiues;
(Onely her lucke is worse to haue it knowne)
Since you are tied together for your liues,
And cannot be diuorst, as I haue showne,
And since you cannot her disgrace report,
But it will breed your scorne: let me exhort,
That you conceale her fault; and let her friends
With bags of monie make you some amendes.

Thus did that polliticke old woman prate,
And *Hercules* went home well satisfied,
Meane while you must conceiue, that craftie *Kate*
Was neither idle, nor ill occupied.
For shee (post hast) a messinger had sent
To let her Parents knowe how all thinges went,
And to desire them (since she stood in need)
They would repaire to *London* with all speed.

And for to keepe without her husbandes reach,
Lockt in a chamber all that day she sate,
Because she had no minde to heare him preach,
Nor of those matters to expostulate.
But when her Parents were come to the Towne,
Out of her chamber she came sadly downe,
Her head close bound, her countenance deiected,
And on her knees their blessing she expected.

But they, (as though she had not been their child
Or they disdeigned to know her) look'd aside.
With bitter wordes they sharpely her reuil'd,
And outwardly made shew to brawle and chide.
But *Kate* with teares of sorrow and contrition
Vpon her knees for pardon made petition;
Desiring them, (since her offence was past)
They would forgiue her, and forget at last.

Married

Married I am (quoth ſhee) and, would to God,
That I could truly ſay I were not married:
But till repentance whip vs with her rod,
With headſtrong youthfull wills we are ſo carried
We cannot turne: vntill too late we finde
Our ſelues nto your ſelues are moſt vnkinde:
And yet how bleſt and happie were my ſtate
Now to repent, if it were not to late.

But I am tied to ſuch a crabbed Clowne,
That all this Cittie ſcarce hath ſuch a fellow;
For he doth nothing elſe but lowre and frowne,
And hath his hoſe allreadie died in yellow:
Becauſe I breed, he twits me with a crime,
And ſaith I am with child before my time:
And though I left you all (by his perſwaſion)
He meanes to caſt me off by this occaſion.

Herewith a dropping ſhowre of trickling teares,
(As moſt of them haue weeping at command)
Did ſtop her ſpeach. And *Hercules* appeares,
Which in the next roome all this while did ſtand;
With whom mine Hoſteſſe in great rage & choler
(Seeming much mou'd to ſee her daughters dolour)
In haſtie manner did begin to chide,
That ſo vnkindly he had vſ'd his Bride.

And hath our daughter againſt our intent
Made choice (ſaid ſhee) of ſuch a froward mate?
Hath ſhe without our liking and conſent
(Preferring your good will before our hate)
Left all her friends, and gone with you away,
And in this ſort doe you her loue repay?
Now (doubtleſſe) ſhe hath made a goodlie match
Fiſhing ſo faire, at length a Frog to catch.

What she hath caught in fishing (he replied)
May by her bellie quickly be perceiued,
But for my part, it cannot be denied,
But with a Frog, or worse, I am deceiued,
Yet howsoeere a Frog fall to my share,
Because in fishing I did not beware,
Since that the Frog too soone doth multiplie,
Ile neither keepe the Frog, nor yet her frie.

The simple truth is this I doe not meane
To stile an others bastard by my name.
He which did till the furrowes, let him gleane,
And reape the crop, that growes vpon the same:
Your daughter is with child: and I doe finde
That by no meanes it can be of my kinde.
Therefore I am resolu'd, (let come what may)
Within my house she shall no longer stay.

Sir (said mine Hostesse) if that she were cleare,
I would thinke scorne to pin her on your sleeue,
But since she is with child (as you doe feare)
And ye are married (though without our leaue)
Whether that you be willing, or else loth
You shall maintaine and patronize them both:
For I am sure you wed not to the halfe,
Yours is the Cow, and you shall keepe the calfe,

She is with child, you say, and what of that?
'Tis none of yours, you thinke: how can you proue it?
I say, if that she be with child, it 's flat,
That you must father, keepe, protect, and loue it.
But 'tis not yet a month, since you were married,
And therefore you suppose she hath miscaried:
But giue me leaue to say, you are deceiu'd
For diuers in lesse time haue been conceiu'd.

You

You are too yong as yet, and much to seeke,
What to these woemens matters doth belong
You thinke, vnlesse she goe full fortie weeke,
That she hath plaied you false and done you wrong;
Alas (goodmen) how cunning you will be
In your wiues childing and deliuerie?
Before you scarce know how to get a child,
You will keepe reconing lest you be beguil'd.

To see the child begotten is your part:
It is your wiues to bring them forth in season,
It shewes a iealous and suspitious heart,
How long or short they reckon, for to reason;
Neuer was man with child. And therefore no man
Can tell those thinges so truly as a woman:
And therefore to your proofe I make deniall,
Since by report you speake, and not by triall.

Some foole, or grosse Physition brought to light
This fond opinion first of fourtie weekes:
But I will shew by argumentes aright,
That this opinion is not worth two leekes:
For though in ancient times it might be true,
Yet in the yeares and ages that ensue
It still should hold, is no sound inference,
As I will shew by good experience.

In former Ages, when the world began,
And that dame Nature was in her full strength,
The time of life appointed vnto man,
Nine hundred and odde yeares was then in length,
Then wiues had time to breed (as writers tell)
And tooke more leisure for to doe thinges well,
Their children were far greater, large, & stronger,
Which was the cause that they accounted longer.

For then a child but newly come to light,
Lying in cloutes vpon his Nurses knee,
Was euerie way as great in outward sight,
As now at 20. yeares a man can bee:
And therefore such great children must by reason
Vnto their birth require a longer season
Then doe out little, silly, Pigmie brats,
Which, in respect of them, are but like Rats.

An other instance likewise doth me moue,
Which much auaileth for this truths discerning,
When our forefathers first began to loue,
And generations art was but in learning,
Men were not halfe so skillfull in the Trade,
As now by long experience they are made:
And therefore shorter time will serue (I hold)
To bring forth children now, then did of old.

Againe, dame Nature is more fertile growne,
Then erst she wonted for to be of yore,
Twice in a yeare you see some meadowes mowne,
And trees to bring forth fruit, (not seene before)
Twice in a yeare some Ewes doe multiplie,
And more then twice some creatures fructifie,
And diuers wiues, whose faith wants no excuse,
Three or 4. children at one birth produce.

In ancient time full 40. weekes did need,
Because their babes were of a larger size:
But now, dame Nature making better speed,
A great deale shorter time doth well suffize.
For manie woemen, after they are wed,
In lesse them 20. weekes are brought a bed;
And some in ten, and some in more, some lesse,
According to their kind, and fruitfullnesse.

And

And which his yet more ſtrange then all the reſt,
But not ſo ſtrange as true; I knowe a wife,
That was eſteem'd as honeſt as the beſt,
And true vnto her husband all her life,
Which, ere a moneth was fully paſt and done
After the wedding, had a goodlie ſonne:
And yet I know her husband will be ſworne,
The child was his, allthough ſo quickly borne.

And therefore, if you meane to liue in quiet,
It is your beſt to make no further trouble
The child is yours: It bootes not to denie it,
And you the father, though ſhe carrie double,
Well (anſwered *Hercules*) I doe not meane
To keepe a baſtard, and anothers Queane:
Good wordes (ſaid ſhe) & then the harme is ſmall;
You muſt and ſhall, and ther's an end of all.

VVhen as mine Hoſt did heare them grow ſo hot,
VVhich all this while ſtood ſilent without ſpeach,
VVith milder wordes, (as they had laid the plot)
That they would heare him ſpeake, he did beſeech:
I cannot tell (quoth he) to what intent
You hold this ſtrong and needleſſe argument:
For manie idle wordes may breed confuſion,
But neuer bring theſe matters to concluſion.

The caſe is thus. Our daughter you haue married
VVithout our leaue, our liking and conſent;
And therefore, if ſhe chance to haue miſcarried,
It is your iuſt deſerued puniſhment.
If we had been the makers of this match,
You might haue ſaid we did you conicatch:
But ſince it was your worke, againſt our minde,
You muſt be pleaſ'd to take ſuch as you finde.

I ſpeake not this, becauſe that I doe thinke
My daughter hath plaid falſe, and done you wrong,
But for to let you know, that you muſt drinke
As you haue bru'd, bee it ſmall or ſtrong:
Beſides, the fault (if that ſhe haue offended)
'Againſt your perſon cannot be intended:
Becauſe the damage, treſpas, and tranſgreſſion
Was done, before that you were in poſſeſſion.

Likewiſe the Lawes of Holie Church doe binde,
And faſt combine you during all your life,
So that no fault, which at the firſt you finde,
Is cauſe ſufficient to diuorce your wife,
For by the Prieſt you vnder-went this curſe,
To haue and hold for better and for worſe
Then ſure by law you neuer can forſake her, (her.
With all her faults (perforce) you needs muſt take

And neuer grudge to take her for your Mate,
For ſhe deſerues your loue: I can you tell,
She might haue had your betters in eſtate,
And left them all, becauſe ſhe lou'd you well:
And for her honeſtie I now dare ſweare,
She is as honeſt, as her mother here:
It is but ſome conceit which feare hath bred,
That thus with iealouſie doth fill your head.

Here: Take her, loue her, and God giue you ioy:
And you ſhall haue 300. pound in hand;
And, after we are dead, you ſhall enioy,
Our houſe, our goods, our monie, and our land:
And if you thinke that *Kate* hath you beguild,
And therefore doe repine to keepe the child,
Send it to vs; And we will entertaine it,
And at our proper charges will maintaine it.

When

When these good motions *Hercules* did heare,
Allthough at first he seemed discontent
Yet at the last all thinges concluded were,
And he well pleas'd with their arbitrement:
And thus you see how *Kate* herselfe behaued,
Whereby her name and credit might be saued:
How *Hercules* is wiu'd, and well befriended,
And all parts pleas'd:and thus my Tale his ended.

But from this storie, which I late haue told,
Some few short obseruations let vs gather
First, how the Cittizen for loue of gold,
An others child was willing for to father:
Whereby we may discerne the seruile minde
Of many Cittizens in this same kinde,
That for desire of profit will not shrinke
At such small faultes, and greater for to winke.

Yea, some of them are so in loue with monie,
Or else so couetous to haue Hornes budding,
That to allure great Beares vnto their honie,
And hungrie dogs vnto a dirtie pudding;
They will not sticke to make their wiues a Stale
To drawe on Customers for better sale;
And vnto some it is the surest prop,
To haue a handsome woman keepe their shop.

And this is one great reason, I suppose,
That in great Townes so many Cuckolds swarme
For when a Woman, beautious as a Rose,
Sits in her shop, the passengers to charme,
Like to a Ship in tempests doth she flit
In danger euer minute to be split,
And though she doth escape both rockes & sand,
Yet is not safe, vntill she come to land.

For

For after all these stormy gustes are past,
And windes are husht, and seas are calme and still,
On subtile Syrens she may fall atlast,
VVhose smiles are wiles; whose kindest lookes do kil
Besides, on cruell Pirats she may light,
And be encountred in the darke of night:
And though a while she fight, yet ten to one (gone
Some cānon shootes her through, & then shee's

Euen so a Cittizen, that sets his wife
A publique lodestone to attract mens eies,
Doth vnto danger leaue her honest life,
Amongst both Syrens, stormes, and Pyracies
And therefore, if that some be Cuckolds named,
Onely themselues I thinke are to be blamed:
For notwithstanding all their shops pretence,
They are the Bawdes vnto their wiues offence.

Yea some of them, (as though this were too little)
To hood the forked corners of their head)
Allthough they know their wiues are fraile & brittle,
And apt into temptations to be led,
Yet vnto Tauernes, spectacles and Plaies;
And to the Court vpon the solemne daies,
They will conuoy them verie faire and quaint,
As though a woman were an earthly Saint.

And yet mistake not, for I will not say,
But manie of them are both chast and pure:
Yet those are meanes to make them run a stray,
For golden booties soone doe theeues allure:
And yet they need no winde to blow the fire:
For they are hot euen of their owne desire,
And some of them (though kept with key & lock)
VVill graft a horne-thorne tree vpon your stocke.

Cornus. A cornel Tree or a Tree whereof Butchers make prickes.

A well-conceited fiction I haue read,
Among the Stories which old Poets framed,
Of one that had within his carefull head
An hundred eyes: and he was *Argus* named.
And yet for all his eyes which neuer cloſed,
But euermore to watching were diſpoſed,
One ſilly woman he could hardly keepe,
For whiles he ſlept but once, ſhe playd bo-peepe.

Oh what deceitfull trickes haue women kinde,
When they intend their luſt to ſatisfie?
How boundleſſe and vnſatiate is their minde,
When they are bent to lawleſſe luxurie?
How brittle, fickle, wauering, falſe and fraile,
Like to a wether-cocke, ſtill turning taile?
So that to write their faults, who doth intend,
May well begin, but nere ſhall make an end.

But why ſhould I complaine of letchery? Obiection.
Or preſſe bad wiues with ſuch an exclamation?
Since they vphold the ſtate of *Cuckoldrie*,
And are the pillars of that ordination.
If that the fruit be good, no cauſe I ſee,
Why we ſhould fault, or diſcommend the tree:
Or by our malice ſeeke the mans diſgrace,
Which by his cunning graft it in that place.

The end is all (the prouerbe old doth ſay)
And doth approue, or diſallow each thing:
Nor do the cauſes wander much aſtray,
Which to a good concluſion matters bring.
If that a woman ſomewhat tread awry,
And follow ſports of luſt and venery,
Why ſhould we blame her, ſince ſhe doth pretend
Her husbands good, and credit in the end.

What reaſon haue I then (may ſome ſuppoſe)
To raile at woemen in this bitter manner?
If wiues were true, and free from ſecret blowes,
How ſhould their husbãds purchaſe ſuch an honor?
If that a *Cuckold* be ſo braue a name,
They rather merit praiſe, then any blame.
And thus will *Momus* ſnarling brood complaine,
What late I prais'd, I now diſpraiſe againe.

Well could I wiſh the world were at that ſtay,
And euery woman of ſo honeſt carriage,
That hornes, which now beare ſuch a mighty ſway,
Might be exil'd the bonds of lawfull marriage.
But ſince this fortune hath befalne ſo many,
I ſay not that I cannot exempt any.
Better it were the title ſhould be graced,
Then honeſt *Cuckolds* vtterly defaced.

And though when fruit is good, we cannot blame
Or fault the perſon which did graft the tree,
Yet in the ground which other men do claime,
We cannot plant, nor graft, nor ſowe as free.
Each hath his parcell; that which is incloſed,
Muſt at the owners pleaſure be diſpoſed.
If ground be ſcarce, the common fields be cheape,
Yet let men ſowe whereas they meane to reape.

The end is all; and ſo may *Cuckolds* ſing,
For many men are *Cuckolds* in the end,
Yet little good proceedeth from that thing
To her, which doth her husband thus offend.
For where ſhe was eſteemed chaſte before,
Now ſhe is taken for a paltry whore:
Nor was her end to win him reputation,
But for to quench the flames of fornication.

If

If that a tyrant merits any praise,
Which doth adiudge a Martyr to be slaine,
Then doth a wanton wife, which spends her dayes
In making hornes to breed her husbands bane
Deserue great thankes: For both alike wee see,
To be the causes of their destinie.
But though bad manners better orders breed,
Still they are nought,& shame shal be their meed.

None I suppose is of so vild a life,
But will affirme it by his owne confession:
To haue close dealing with anothers wife,
It is a shameless and a great transgression;
Yet though from thence arise a *Cuckolds* name,
No blemish can redound vnto the same.
For oft we see,euen from a dung-hill growes,
Sweet flowers, which neither sent nor odour lose.

Many a man of credit,and good place,
Hath earnd great riches by a stinking Trade:
And neither doth his liuing him deface,
Nor of a baser reckoning is he made.
Why then should men thus scorne a *Cuckolds* life,
For that his name comes by a stinking wife?
Who doth dislike good meat,is void of wit,
Although a greazie Scullion turne the spit.

As Iakes-farmers, Scauingers, and Curriers.

Many a wicked father hath beene knowne,
To haue a sonne of good and honest life:
And many a famous *Cuckold* of renowne,
Hath erst beene married to a wanton wife.
And yet the womans lewdnesse is no shame
Vnto the credit of a *Cuckolds* name.
For (certs)a *Cuckold* in his generation
Is held a name of worth and estimation.

And of all men that liue vpon the ground,
None can more fitly be a Martyr named:
For with such scoffes and mockes his dayes abound,
As would in truth make any man ashamed,
But that with patience he is possest,
Which makes him happie and his state more blest:
For Patience such a noble vertue is,
As will in fine promote him vnto blisse.

This is the cause so many learned Clarkes,
So many antient Authors, and graue men,
Did in their seueral volumes and their workes,
Much in the praise of worthy Cuckolds pen.
For where this patience is so much commended,
A Cockolds honor needs must be intended.
And well we may expound them in that sense,
Since that a Cuckold is all Patience.

And rather truly might those learned wits,
Applaud a Cuckold vnder that pretence:
Because this vertue, which that state befits,
Might beare among them some preheminence.
The pollicy of old Writers in praysing Cuckolds.
And since it might seeme foolish to dilate,
In open words the glory of their state;
Better they thought to set before her eyes
The patient Cuckolds praises in this wise.

Tully the Orator so much admir'd,
The Paragon of sweet-tun'd Eloquence,
In such a robe of glory hath attir'd
A Cuckolds vertue and his patience:
Hæc qui faciat, non ego summis viris eum comparo, verùm etiam simillimum Dijs iudico.
That he not onely hath preferd him cleere
Before all men that are, or euer were;
But also hath (without respect of ods)
Reputed him as equall to the gods.

I list not here alledge what all haue said,
In commendation of the patient crue,
The vsuall examples, which are made,
Do proue my sayings and assertions true.
That sure I wonder, and I much admire them,
(Vnlesse the hornes with patience do inspire them)
How they so meekly suffer and abide,
The wrongs and iniuries which them betide.

But (doubtlesse) they are men of gallant parts, *Posse & Nolle Nobile.*
And scorne to take reuenge for euery toy:
It fits not valorous and noble harts
To picke a quarrell with each scruny boy:
They liue contented still what ere befall,
And for their crosses neither fight nor brall,
What *Fortune* sends, they willingly receiue,
As you by this example may perceiue.

An honest good plaine-dealing man of life,
Which got his liuing daily by his labour,
Finding a knaue in sporting with his wife,
And playing frolickly vpon his Tabor,
Did not, as some would vse to sweare & swagger, A wise and honest Cuckold.
And at the first sight stab him with his dagger;
But in good words he wisht they would amend,
And let him go, because he was his friend.

Here is a glasse for all men to behold
How great the patience of a Cuckold is,
Worthy in leaues of brasse to be inrold,
That after-ages might remember this.
Neuer was person of so mild a hart,
That if he found his wife at such a part,
Would with such quiet brooke so great a scorne,
Except he had an interest in the horne.

Note this my yong gallants.

I know some hot-spurd youths, which are not wed,
Will sweare this *Cuckold* was a very lout:
For if that they had found the knaue a bed,
Zound's, by the eares they would haue puld him out.
They would haue beate the villaine like a stocke,
That neuer after he should loue the smocke:
And in such manner they would vse the Boore,
Scarce he should go aliue out of their doore.

Omnes facilè cum valemus, Recta consilia ægrotis demus.

Thus will my youthfull striplings, in their vaine,
Brag of their valor, ere they go to field.
But vanting Souldiers oftentimes are slaine,
Or in the battle forced for to yeeld.
An emptie vessell giues a mighty sound,
When least or nothing can therein be found.
Many can tell the way to tame a shrow,
But they which haue the woman do not know.

Oft haue I heard a gallant say as much,
And stamp, & sweare, that he would flea him quicke:
Yet hath his fortune afterwards beene such,
Though he haue come euen in the very nicke,
And taken one in bourding with his wife,
He durst not draw his dagger for his life,
But was content to faine himselfe asleepe,
Meane while his head was armed like a sheepe.

What are they better if they take the knaue,
And beat him soundly, or bereaue his life?
Can they auoyd the title they must haue?
Or purchase any credit to their wife?
'Tis but a meanes to breed their further scorne,
Because so grieuously they take the horne.
Better it is to see, and not espy it,
Then by their folly more for to descry it.

But

But if the Cuckold-maker be so bold,
To turne againe, and brauely play the man;
And knocke the Cuckold while his cudgell hold,
In what a taking is the Cuckold than?
Surely by this needs must he gaine profoundly,
That both is Cuckolded and beaten soundly,
Much wiser might he seeme to hold his peace,
Then with shrewd knocks his sorrows to increase.

If my aduice may serue in any sted,
Rather I giue thee counsaile not to see,
When thou beholdst a knaue within thy bed,
Then for to make a brawle, or mutinie:
For he that takes the horne in such a grudge,
A very simple fellow men him iudge.
When he that is not halfe so foole-precise,
Is oft esteemed to be very wise.

And well may he be taken for a Clowne,
VVhich, when hee cannot remedy the thing,
Doth in his fury trouble all the Towne,
And makes the Country of his folly ring.
But though the vulgar sort a Cuckold deeme him,
Yet worthy of that name I not esteeme him.
For to the horne this vertue doth belong,
That patient heads must vndergoe each wrong.

He is a Cuckold, not worthy to bee a Cuckold.

And now vpon a sudden to my sight
Presents himselfe a greater foole then this;
VVhich is not onely pleas'd to bring to light,
And make a wonder of his wiues amisse.
But for to proue himselfe a very Daw,
Needes must hee bee diuorced by the Law.
The first; *By witnesse is a Cuckold cleped,*
This; *By authority the hornes hath reaped.*

A Cuckold with a witnes, and a Cuckold by authority.

Graue-

Graue-headed fathers of the horned crue,
And all yee patient friends of *Cuckoldshire*,
Let me intreat a little boone of you:
(Tis for your good and credit I require)
Banish these peasants, these two lowring Ianglers,
Expell them from your company for wranglers:
Raze out their names and titles from your booke,
Which their good fortune with such fury brooke.

Neuer let them be ranged in your band,
Which grieue to haue their Head-peece made of (horne,
It cannot with your reputation stand,
Your colours by faint cowards should be borne.
Plucke off their horns, & on their coxcombs place
A paire of Asses eares to their disgrace.
VVell doth their folly this old saying fit,
A male-contented Cuckold hath no wit.

For let me but expostulate this case;
Although to you I know it is but vaine,
VVhich are of wisdome, and with time and place
Can order all your actions to your gaine.
VVhat better is the wood-cocke, made a wonder,
VVhen with a knaue he sees his wife lye vnder?
Or what amendment doth he reape from hence,
To put her quite away for this offence?

I must confesse (perforce) this is the way
To let the world haue notice of his name:
Yet him I hold a foole which doth display
Those things which may redound vnto his shame.
And greater is his madnesse I suppose,
VVhich whē he hath good fortune, scarcely knows
But most his folly, if I dare so say,
Which bolts the doore when Steed is stolne away.

Better

Better it is in quiet take the cup,
(Since what is woven cannot be vn-ſpun)
And patiently to drinke thy ſorrowes vp,
Than call in queſtion what thy wife hath done.
If of the hornes perchance thou art aſhamed,
Tenne times as much by this thou art defamed:
And where to few before the fault was knowne,
Now all about the countrey it is blowne.

Thou may'ſt remoue th'occaſion of this matter,
And by a lawfull courſe diuorce thy wife:
Yet with the vulgar ſort, which cannot flatter,
Thou ſhalt be thought a Cuckold all thy life.
And though with equitie you be vntied,
The moſt will cenſure hardly on thy ſide:
For whether part ſoeuer be in fault,
Still is the husband deemed for to halt.

But to conclude, when all is come about,
And that from thee thy wife is quite diuorced,
What haſt thou earned but a mocke or flout?
For ſtill to weare the hornes thou muſt be forced.
Yet here proceedes great cauſe to make thee ſorie,
The name of Cuckold giues to thee no glorie:
And though the title make another bleſt,
Shame and diſgrace it paints vpon thy creſt.

The pureſt Whear, caſt in a cankred ground,
Dies ere it ſprout, and neuer yeelds increaſe:
Good holeſome meat, when bodie is vnſound,
Doth cloy the ſtomacke, and the man diſeaſe:
So, if the Hornes be grafted in his head,
Which is with furie and impatience led,
Nothing but ſcoffes and mocks they do importune,
Though otherwiſe the Scutchions of good fortune.

This is the ſcope and meaning of the place,
That ancient Poets of *Actæon* faine,
Which took the hornes with griefe and ſuch diſgrace,
That of his dogged paſſions he was ſlaine.
For this the ſtorie plainely ſhewes in part,
His dogs did teare him in the ſhape of Hart:
And this to all mad Cuckolds be the end,
Which grudge at that they neuer can amend.

All wiues which haue doting husbands ſay Amen.

Here can I not with ſilence ouer-paſſe,
Without great preiudice vnto the Horne,
To tell how patient once a Painter was,
(As kind a Cuckold as was euer borne)
And ſiuce it is a matter of ſome worth,
Meet to be drawne in golden colours forth,
After my ſimple skill it ſhall be painted,
Though with the Pencill I am not acquainted.

This cunning Painter was but newly wed,
Liuing in pleaſure with his wanton wife;
When Fortune ayming for to horne his head,
(As Fortune ſtill diſturbes the quiet life)
Gaue him occaſions by an enuious chance,
That he by ſea muſt trauaile into France,
The night before his iourney he did take,
Thus to his wife in bed the Painter ſpake.

Sweet wife (quoth he) thou know'ſt I loue thee deerly,
And much I grieue to leaue thee thus alone,
I feare my ablence it will touch thee neerely,
And my departure cauſe thee ſigh and mone:
But be content (my deere) I will not ſtay
Aboue a moneth at moſt from thee away,
'Tis but a little while (my pretie Sweet)
Shortly I hope againe we two ſhall meet.

Yet.

Yet in remembrance, till I come againe,
And that in heart with thee at home I am,
Let me entreat thee (if it be no paine)
That on thy belly I may paint a Lambe:
Not that thy truth or honeſtie I feare,
For thou art too too honeſt I dare ſweare;
But that it be a ſigne before thy eyes,
Both when thou go'ſt to bed, and doſt ariſe.

And that when ſtill thou look'ſt vpon this geere,
And on the little Lambe doſt caſt a glance,
Thou maiſt remember who did paint him there,
And ſend a ſigh vnto the coaſt of France,
And thinke thy husband will no longer ſtay,
Then his affaires be paſt, if winds obey;
And with theſe words he kiſt her, and ſo ſtaid,
When ſhe againe this readie anſwere made.

Husband (quoth ſhe) and then the woman wept,
And ſigh'd and ſob'd, as though ſhe had been ſickly:
Deere husband, your great kindneſſe I accept,
And ſore lament, we thus muſt part ſo quickly.
Yet neuer thinke that I ſhould you forget,
Thogh your affaires a twelue month ſhould you let:
But if to paint a Lambe will breed your eaſe,
Paint on my belly euen while you pleaſe.

The good plaine-dealing man was glad of this,
He tooke his Pencill, and to worke he went,
And on her belly did he paint (ywis)
A pretie little Lambe incontinent.
But ſince the winde for no mans cauſe doth ſtay,
He is imbarkt for France, and gone away:
Pitie it were to tell the griefe and mone
His wife made for him, being left alone.

Behold how croſſe ſometimes our fortune playes,
The Painter his affaires did hap ſo ill,
That now are almoſt paſt thrice thirtie dayes,
And yet he is conſtrain'd to tarrie ſtill:
So that before his buſineſſe was ended,
Three quarters of a yeare were quite expended:
And ſince in France ſo long the Painter tarries,
Marke how his wife her ſelfe in England carries.

A moneth ſhe tooke his abſence paſſing ſad;
But when he came not at th'appointed day,
She entertaines another luſtie lad,
For to maintaine the ſport, and hold her play:
Which in all points did pleaſe her luſt ſo right,
That he was welcome to her euerie night;
Nor much ſhe cared, but in outward ſhow,
Whether the Painter came againe or no.

The luſtie youth, which was with her acquainted,
And kept poſſeſſion of her husbands place,
By chance eſpied vpon her bellie painted
The little Lambe, whereat he laught apace:
But ſure he thought it wanted ſome perfection,
Becauſe of hornes there was a plaine defection;
And therefore when the woman was aſleepe,
He painted two great hornes vpon the ſheepe.

Now is the Painters buſineſſe quite paſt,
And he from France by ſea is ſafely come;
His wife about his necke her armes doth caſt,
And kiſſe him oft, and bid him welcome home:
A good kind wife.
Ah my ſweet husband (then ſhe kindly wept)
What ſad misfortune hath ſo long thee kept?
Againe ſhe kiſt him, and againe ſhe cried,
If longer you had ſtay'd, I ſhould haue died.

Her

Her louing husband taking all for truth,
(Seeing his wife to weepe for very ioy)
Kiſt her moſt kindly, like a wanton youth,
And ſeem'de as blithe and luſtie as a boy:
He tooke her ſtreight, and ſet her on his knee;
Ah my ſweet wife, how does my Loue? (quoth he)
How fares my Turtle? I haue done thee wrong,
In ſtaying from thy compənie ſo long.

But ſuch (ſweet-heart) was my diſaſter chance,
And ſuch occaſions did my comming let,
That I no ſooner could returne from France,
(No harme, thought ſhe, if you had tarried yet)
But ſince (quoth he) at laſt I am come backe,
Drinke welcome to me in a pint of Sacke:
She dranke to him, he pledg'd her; to be ſhort,
They ſupt, and went to bed in honeſt ſort.

And now the Painter 'gan for to remember,
That on the night, before he went from home,
A little Lambe he painted on the limber
Vp-bearing out-ſide of her tender wombe:
Therefore, that he aſſuredly might know
Whether his wife had faithfull been or no,
To view the Lambe he 'gan her kindly pray,
Which he did paint before he went away.

Husband (quoth ſhe) that you may plainely ſee
I haue preſerv'd my faith as vndefil'd,
Behold the Lambe, and after iudge of me,
If in your abſence I haue you beguil'd.
Therewith ſhe ſhew'd her bellie, whereon faire
The painted Lambe appear'd with hornes a paire:
Whereat he ſtarted as he were afraid,
Yet his owne picture was there truly made.

The woman maruelled for to behold
The Lambe deſcrib'd with ſuch a goodly head:
The man was angrie, yet his peace did hold,
And ſtood amaz'd, as though he had beene dead:
But ſhe (as women are by nature ſlie,
Apt to excuſe their folly with a lie)
After that ſhe ſome little pauſe had made,
Demurely to her husband thus ſhe ſaid.

Et quanquàm videas oculis præſentibus, audet excuſare factum.

Well may you wonder how this comes to paſſe,
And thinke (ſweet husband) I haue beene vnkinde,
Yet if you ponder how it changed was,
And how the Lambe transformed thus we finde,
I doe not doubt but you will iudge me true
In deed, in word, in thought, in all to you,
For by the Sunne that ſhines before my face,
I know not when the hornes came in this place.

And yet the night before you did depart,
And left me like a widow here at home,
A little Lambe, according to your art,
You painted (you remember) on my wombe:
If at that preſent time it was a Lambe,
Although no greater but to ſucke his dammē,
Yet ſince a twelue month you haue tarried hence,
Now it muſt be a ſheepe by conſequence.

Note her argument.

When as her husband heard this fine excuſe,
So wittie, pleaſant, and ſo readie told,
Though he was much aggrieued at th'abuſe,
And well perceiu'd the ſheepe was of his fold,
(Knowing the hornes which fell vnto his ſhare
Were marriage-fortune and good neighbors fare)
He tooke with patience what did him moleſt,
And ſmiling kindly, put it vp in ieſt.

Loe here (kind Cuckolds) present to your view
A worthie mirror of true patience,
A rare example, meet for all the crue,
With whom the hornes shall haue preheminence.
This is the way to win your reputation,
And make your wiues to leaue their fornication:
These are the meanes a womans feet to stay,
Which is dispos'd to range, or goe astray.

Bootlesse it is to breake a womans will,
Or seeke to curbe her pleasures by thy rage;
For if she once be giuen vnto ill,
Brawles, strife, nor anger can her lust assuage.
If Riuers haue their course, they gently fall,
Stop but their passage, then they throw downe all:
So if a woman be restrain'd by force,
She growes more headstrong, and by nature worse.

Ivam atque animos a crimine sumunt.

Take for example what one Cuckold did;
Which when he heard his wife was prone to sinne,
Shut not the dores vnkindly, but streight bid
More should be made to let her louers in,
That euery person, when the dores were many,
Might come and goe away, vnseene of any:
But when his wife did see his disposition,
She left her wanton life and lewd condition.

Many, before they marrie, seeme to boast
How they will dominire when they are wed,
For they will tie their wiues vnto a post,
Before she graft the horne vpon their head:
And they with watch and ward will so preuent her,
That no corriuall shall haue time to enter,
And maugre fortune, and in spight of chance,
After the Horne-pipe they will neuer dance.

But let them know, no policies preuaile,
No art, no craft, no force, their fate to shun;
Strong brazen walls; *Argus* his eyes doe faile
To keepe a woman, when she list misdone:
And if she once doe by his lookes espie
No faith her husband doth in her relie,
Or else is iealous, and doth her mistrust,
Much more she is incensed vnto lust.

In vaine thou stand'st within a womans way,
When she is once past honestie and grace:
For though thou watch and ward her night and day,
And haue her present still before thy face,
By some deuice or other which may fall,
Occasion she will find to pay for all:
And (or fit place she to her pleasures lacke)
She will not sticke to horne thee at thy backe.

Preuent an euill (doth the Prouerbe say)
But when an euill comes by destinie,
And cannot be auoided any way,
What profit falls by peruerse iealousie?
Nothing but this; that standing still on thornes,
Suspition bids thee to beware the hornes:
And (sure) a horned head lesse griefe doth finde,
Then doth a iealous and a horned minde.

I cannot well commend that simple Swaine,
Which for his hatred to the Cuckoes song,
(Because the Cuckoe in a merrie vaine
Sometimes did sing his Appletrees among)
Cut downe the trees, that she might sit no more
So neere his house, as she had done before.
But whether neere or farre the Cuckoe flie,
No Cuckold can auoid his destinie.

I meruaile much, and cannot know the reason,
Why euery fooliſh Peaſant and rude knaue,
When as they heare the Cuckoe in the ſeaſon,
Which in theſe quarters doth her preſence craue,
Send out her notes ſo pleaſant and ſo ſhrill,
That all true Cuckolds they with gladneſſe fill;
Why they ſhou'd mocke, deride, abuſe, & flout her,
And to the death with ſtones & cudgels clout her.

In my conceit, of all the fowles that flie,
Moſt pleaſant are her notes, ſurpaſſing all,
Chaunting ſo ſweet the fame of Cuckoldrie,
That vnto men they ſeeme Angelicall,
And ſo replete with ſugred melodie,
As driues kind Cuckolds to an extaſie:
Ah, ſweetly, ſweetly, doth the Cuckoe ſing
The Cuckolds prayſes in the pleaſant Spring.

Familiar is her ſong, ſmooth, eaſie, plaine,
Not harſh, nor hardly wreſted from her throat:
No bird there is knowne ſooner by her ſtraine,
In ſuch regard is growne the Cuckoes note:
Yet is her voice ſo pleaſant to the eare,
It glads the meaneſt creature it doth heare;
For neuer I beheld ſo ſoure a face,
But for to heare her ſong did laugh apace.

Fond wantonizing *Ouid* giue vs place,
Compariſons in all things are not meet;
'Tis not your Nightingale that can diſgrace
The Cuckoes tunes, ſo muſicall, ſo ſweet.
Her warbling notes ſcarce equall halfe the skill
That is compact within a Cuckoes bill.
Packe hence (poore Woodcock) teach your bird to ſing,
The louely Cuckoe is of Birds the King.

Greatly I maruaile thou would'st be so blind,
Being a man of wisdome, to prefer
A feminino genere. That piping bird, sprung from a pewling kind,
Before the Cuckolds merrie Trumpeter;
Since she complaines of murder, rape, and wrong.
The Cuckolds glorie is the Cuckoes song:
Nulla potest Cuculo æquinalere meo. And when she chantes it in her pleasant mood,
Shee makes the sweetest noise in all the Wood.

And yet (in truth) I cannot much thee blame,
If ignorance did lead thee thus awrie:
Thou wouldst haue writ diuinely in her fame,
If thou hadst knowne a Cuckolds dignitie:
And highly hadst thou grac'd thy wanton vaine
In praysing her, that sings thy praise againe.
This, this had beene a subiect for thy pen,
To all thrice welcome that are married men.

But since I thinke thou bore no good affection
To honest Cuckolds, nor the Cuckoes song.
Thy bookes of Loue doe make a plaine detection.
Thy mind was much inclined vnto wrong,
And thou a lewd professed Cuckold-maker,
And therefore would'st not be with her partaker.
For still Experience euidently shewes,
That Cuckold-makers are the Cuckoes foes.

Famous Sir *Geffrie Chaucer*, you were wise,
And worthily esteemed an English Poet,
And like a Scholler you could poetise:
Yet once you plaid the foole, I let you know it.
For in that great assemblie which you make,
Wherein together birds did counsaile take,
You greatly wronged this birds magnificence
In giuing her so small preheminence

Reason it was, she should before the rest
Haue taken place, and order, in her station;
Both for her voice, which is in great request,
And also for the Cuckolds reputation.
But you no Cuckold were it may be deemed,
Or Cuckolds then were not so much esteemed:
Or (sure) Sir *Geffrie*, you were beetle-blind
In tearming basely such a bird vnkind.

But as for *Skelton* with his Lawrel Crowne,
Whose ruffling rimes are emptie quite of marrow:
Or fond *Catullus*, which set grossely downe
The commendation of a fillie Sparrow:
Because their lines are void of estimation,
I passe them ouer without confutation.
Much would the Cuckoe think herselfe impared,
If shee with Philip Sparrow were compared.

Let chirping Philip learne to catch a flie,
And picke vp crums from off his Mistris finger:
And let the Nightingales sweet harmonie
Winne her the name and title of a singer:
These are not all the praises we can bring
To praise the Cuckoe which attends the spring.
For well I may alleage in her defence
She is a bird of wonderous patience.

Too much it were to reckon all the wrong,
And euery iniurie doth her betide:
No sooner she begins her louely song,
Which Knaues and Minions cannot well abide,
But one or other Woodcocke that doth heare her,
With threats and cursings is at hand to teare her,
That sure I thinke she could not liue a day,
If she did want the wit to flie away.

One foole derides and mockes her to her face;
(As if her words did not concerne his honour)
Another, being angrie, chases apace,
And with a murren bids a shame light on her:
The comes a third will neither curse nor mock her,
But seekes with stones and cudgels for to knock her.
Thus liues the Cuckoe, which offendeth no man,
Scorn'd, persecuted, both of man and woman.

Meane while the harmelesse creature (pretie Fowle)
Flies vp and downe content from tree to tree;
Gently with patience she abides controll,
For neuer was she angrie I could see:
But still with meekenesse and great modestie
Well she digests their inciuilitie;
And not a word she giues them vndiscreetly,
But onely Cuckoe, which she sings most sweetly.

As in her language, if you marke her well,
Thus to the busie fooles the bird did speake:
Cuckolds (quoth she) whose conscience is your hell,
And thinke on me your malice for to wreake;
You that doe take the Horne in such disgrace,
Grieuing to haue it grafted on your face,
Content your selues, your fortunes are not daintie,
The Cuckoe saith, That Cuckolds there are plentie.

Then frolicke, Sirs, this fragrant time of yeare,
Pale iealousie was neuer void of woe,
Sorrow is more encreast by needlesse feare,
Heart-fretting care to health was euer foe:
Your States, the Cuckoe tels you, are no worse
Than many thousands, which nor brawle nor curse:
Many do beare great bookes, know scarce a letter,
Many are learned which are nere the better.

Many

Many are Cuckolds, which suppose they are not;
Some are No Cuckolds, which thinke they are none:
Wise be the Cuckolds which both be and care not;
Fond is the man which is not, will be one:
But one or not one, still I am your friend,
You either are, or may be in the end,
I sing your prayses to expell your sorrow,
And thus the Cuckoe bids you all Good morrow.

Three degrees of Cuckolds.
One & none.
One and one.
None, and one.

Ah sweet and pleasant bird, how I admire
The vnregarded vertue of thy kind!
How neere thy meet behauior doth aspire
Vnto the patience of the Cuckolds mind!
Certes it is a glorious thing to see
The Cuckoe thus with Cuckolds to agree,
And well deserues some worthie Poets pen,
That birds can learne the qualities of men.

Anger the Raven, he will flye about,
As though his meaning were to seize vpon thee;
The Goose will gaggle, and the Cocke crie out,
And euery other bird call shame vpon thee:
Annoy the Larke, and he will hang the wing,
Trouble the Nightingale, she leaues to sing;
Onely the Cuckoe, which surmounts them all,
She still chaunts Cuckoe, whatsoere befall.

Inter aues etenim nulla tibi similis.

No hurt she meanes to any liuing thing,
And therefore deemes no creature will her harme:
For when her little egges she forth doth bring,
Within anothers neast she layes them warme,
Supposing that kind bird will loue them deere,
As Cuckolds doe, which no deceit doe feare,
Suffering their wiues to keepe good companie,
Thinking that men will vse them honestly.

Neither doe I esteeme her as a Sinner,
(Although *Pythagoras* reproue the fault,
Which neuer eat an egge vnto his dinner,
But onely fed vpon a root and salt)
Because she flyes into anothers nest,
And suckes the egges which there she liketh best,
Nor doth she more deserue and merit blame,
Than honest men, which daily eat the same.

Rather I deeme her worthie commendation,
(If to the Cuckoe her desert we giue)
Since she deuoures and suckes their procreation,
That eat the corne whereby mankind should liue.
Herein she shewes her selfe a friend to man,
Seeking his good by all the meanes she can,
Both in applauding them which weare the horne,
And sucking vp their brood which eat the corne.

Kind gentlewomen, ye which take delight,
A pratling Parrat in your Cage to haue,
Because she prates good morrow and good night,
Or bids a sawcie fellow Walke a knaue.
And ye which keepe a Puppie or a Daw,
To make you laugh by playing with a straw,
Let not these toyes be thought a womans treasure,
But keepe the louely Cuckoe for your pleasure.

Your Iack-daw cannot with her siluer bell
Match this sweet bird, the mistresse of the Spring;
And trust me truly, she doth farre excell
Your Puppie and your Parrat in each thing.
The Parrat prates as she is taught by rote,
This bird by nature hath a merrie note,
And all her songs, in lieu of fauors showne,
Shall tell your husbands glorie, or your owne.

Thrice

Thrice famous *Dauid Lindsey* of the North,
Thou hadst great conference with a Popingay,
Which erst did tell thee many things of worth,
As they in print are extant at this day:
Yet greater matters might thy pen haue painted,
If with the Cuckoe thou hadst beene acquainted:
For deeper mysteries doth she bewray,
Than euer was reueal'd by Popingay.

No bird, nor any creature hath the grace,
(Though they in other qualities excell)
Which can so truly to a mans owne face
In good plaine tearmes his proper title tell.
No sooner she a married man espies,
But in her language Cuckoe straight she cries:
Which her a Prophet makes me to suppose,
Since secret faults so openly she shewes.

If she farre off a companie descrie,
Or by the noyse their comming vnderstand,
Cuckoe she doubles most melodiously,
As if she said, More Cuckolds are at hand:
And (though she neuer see them) she can tell
Both what the persons are, and where they dwell;
Cuckolds they are, if you their names require,
And where they dwell? forsooth in Cuckoldshire.

This is the cause, I thinke, that Iealousie
Repines to heare the Cuckoe sing so faire:
For he, consum'd with foolish phrenesie,
With raging madnesse, griefe, and fretting care,
Kickes like a scabbed Iade, when he doth heare
That name repeated which he needes must beare,
And with impatience brookes her gracious call,
Which tels him truly what will after fall.

Ano-

Another sort there are, which cannot well
Abide to heare the Cuckoe for their liues,
But do detest her as a Fiend of Hell:
And these are women, Minions, vnchast wiues,
Which are asshamed for to haue displaid,
How their kind husbands they haue Cuckolds made:
Or they are Bastards, which scarce loue to heare
Their mothers faults, and who their fathers were.

But for the yeomen of the horned Crowd,
Me thinkes their ioy and comfort is not small,
To heare the Cuckoe carroll out so lowd.
The wondrous glorie doth their states befall,
And so harmoniously their prayses sing,
That Woods and Forests with their Ecchoes ring:
Doubtlesse a Cuckold is a gallant name,
When birds chant Hymnes in honor of the same.

And such in ancient times hath beene the praise,
And estimation of this worthie State,
(Though much it be disgraced in these daies,
And sore abused of each scoffing Mate)
That Kings and Emperors haue thought no scorne
For arms to beare the beasts which weare the horn,
And crowns & scepters, thrones & great dominiõs,
Are not more rich than hornes in somes opinions.

Let famous Greece be witnesse of this thing,
Where horned heads were wont to beare such sway,
That seldome any came to be their King,
But still he prou'd a Cuckold, as some say.
This *Menelaus* well could verifie,
Whose hornes procur'd Troyes endlesse miserie:
*Yet not from them arose that mortall strife,
But that he could not haue againe his wife.

*The hornes were not the cause.

He

He could haue beene content with all his heart
To haue beene Cuckold, and haue blest his fortune,
If they his wife had suffered to depart,
Whom he to haue againe did much importune:
But when he saw faire meanes could not obtaine
It was concluded, he by force shuld gain her; (her,
To make it knowne, that she was his by right,
And shew himselfe a Cuckold of great might.

And not alone was he a Cuckold deemed;
But *Agamemnon*, which was eke his brother,
And in the warres as chiefe commaunder seemed,
Had happie fortune to be made another.
Nor could *Vlysses* quite himselfe exile
From out this companie by any wile:
For though *Penelope* was loth to marrie,
So long without a friend she could not tarrie.

Samius saith, that all her Woers lay with her, and thereupon *Pan* was begotten.

Survey the Histories of elder daies;
Peruse the chronicles of euery Nation;
And thou shalt find that men of greatest praise,
Wealth, riches, honor, fame, and estimation,
Most valiant, hardie, learned, graue, and wise,
Grieu'd not to be addrest in Cuckolds guise.
And thus hath Fortune often thought it best
To make kind-hearted Cuckolds perfect blest.

None euer liu'd and haue had better chance,
Or beene inhanced vnto higher state:
None of more valour, might or cheuisance,
Or in the warres haue beene more fortunate,
Or greater glorie and renowne haue wonne,
Then hath the Cuckold, and the Cuckolds sonne;
As from these two great Monarchs we may gather
Great *Alexander*, and his worthie Father.

I will not here insist my lines to cumber,
Let it suffice, that I haue named two.
He which assaies by name to take the number
of ancient Cuckolds, shall haue much to doo.
If he can tell the sands vpon the shore,
Then he may count the Cuckolds all of yore.
This is enough to free the name from scorne:
Kings haue not beene asham'd to weare a horne.

But what should I dilate of earthly Kings,
Of worldly Monarchs, and of mortall men?
Since *Ioues* owne wife, (as *Ouid* sweetly sings,
And other pleasant Poets erst did pen.)
Iuno the glorious Empresse of the skies,
Queene of the aire, where winds doe tiranise,
Was through her husbands vsuall ribaldrie
Made Ladie regent vnto Cuckoldrie.

Nor had she only such propitious luck,
(Though she in Heauen chiefe Cuckqueane was repu-
Vulcan her sonne was headed like a Buck, (ted)
And by the lustie God of Warre cornuted.
And *Ioue* himself, (though some the truth do shroud,
Faining *Ixion* did imbrace a cloud)
Was in this common lot a great partaker,
And both a Cuckold, and a Cuckold-maker.

If then no other matter did commend
Or paint the glorie of a Cuckold forth;
This were enough (me thinks) that I haue pend,
To grace his title and approue his worth.
That *Ioue*, his wife and sister, and their sonne,
Were subiect to that chance which none can shun.
And yet a Cuckolds dignitie is such,
That in his praise I cannot speake too much.

Greatly

Greatly I muſe, and no occaſion find,
Why men ſhould mocke a Cuckold with the horne;
And ſcoffing Peaſants (as they come behind)
Should with two fingers point at him in ſcorne;
Since he hath oftentimes as good a face,
As he that ſeeks his blemiſh and diſgrace.
And in his forhead (though you marke him neare)
Seldome or neuer doe the hornes appeare.

If one but ſtumbles as he goes along,
Or chance to ſtrike his foot againſt a ſtone:
Tis with the vulgar ſort a common ſong;
Some Cuckold there was buried long agon,
Whoſe hornes vpſtarting ſtrongly in this place
Well neare had caſt the fellow on his face.
Surely I wonder where theſe hornes ſhould be,
Which each one talks of, yet could neuer ſee.

But let vs grant, what addle heads ſuppoſe;
That hornes are grafted on a Cuckolds brow:
Small hurt thereby vnto a Cuckold growes,
Nor is he therefore like an Oxe or Cow,
Or to be thought a monſter vnto nature,
Or a miſhapen and deformed creature;
But in all points a comely handſome man,
And not vnlike vnto the great God, *Pan*.

Pan was a mightie *Syluan* God of yore,
And (by tranſlation) *Pan* doth all containe:
Yet on his head a paire of hornes he wore;
Which ſhewes that hornes to all alike remaine.
Why then ſhould hornes a Cuckold ſo diſgrace,
Since that a God hath borne them on his face?
Certes I bleſſe his fortune with my heart,
Which is alike the Gods in any part.

The siluer Moone, faire Cynthia of the night,
The great'st and swiftest Planet in the skie,
Which did in marriage neuer take delight,
But as a maid kept her virginitie,
(And therefore cannot well be Cuckold deemed)
Of such great value hath the hornes esteemed,
That still she weares them, not accounted strange,
Three or foure dayes before and after change.

In great account our Elders heretofore
Did hold the horne, when as they went to fight,
The sound whereof their strength encreased more,
And with fresh courage did supply their might.
And when in hunting they pursu'd their game,
They tooke great pleasure for to vse the same:
It cheares the dogs, it makes them come and goe,
'Tis much in hunting, well a Horne to blow.

And such a necessarie Instrument
It is for hunting either Hare or Conie,
That not a Huntsman wants this implement,
Nor would be void of it for any monie.
And so much credit now attends it daily,
That euery common Crier, Petie Baily,
Swine-heards and braue Sow-golders in a pride
Doe beare a horne low dangling by their side.

Matters of chiefe importance are in hast,
And for more speed dispatched by the horne:
Great light a Lanthorne, made of horne, doth cast,
Which with a candle in darke night is borne.
When little children first are brought to schoole,
A Horne booke is a necessarie toole:
Nor can a Shoomaker well lacke this ginne,
A shooing-horne exceeds the Squirrels skinne.

What

What should I tell the vertues of the horne,
Which are incredible to muddie braines?
Grosse ignorance will laugh the truth to scorne,
Because beyond his compasse it containes:
But let him know, some hornes haue such refection,
They can expell each poyson and infection,
And that the shauings of a Horners stall,
Good to preserue are Artichokes withall.

But of all Hornes that euer I haue heard,
None is more famous than *the Horne of Plentie*,
Which had so great abundance still prepar'd,
Take while men would, yet it was neuer emptie:
Which (not vnfitly) we may well compare
Vnto the hornes befall a Cuckolds share:
For these are chests, that hold great store of treasure,
Though these men liue at ease, & spend at pleasure.

Such profit and commodities arise,
And so great gaine redoundeth from the horne,
Vnto the Cuckold, which will blind his eyes,
And can with patience well endure the scorne,
That many haue a better liuing made,
Than by the traffique of their honest Trade:
And some haue found such gettings by these means,
That they haue forst their wiues to play the queans.

Many that seeme substantiall men in Towne,
Reape through the horne an hundred pound by yeare,
And many which are scarcely worth a crowne,
Thus keepe themselues with pride and lordly cheare:
And many which in prison haue beene layd,
In taking of the horne their debts haue payd,
That sure I thinke, though other hornes be daintie,
A Cuckolds horne it is the *Horne of Plentie*.

And yet not onely doth the horne befriend,
And yeeld the Cuckold that which is his due,
But wondrous profit often doth it send
Vnto his wife, although she be vntrue.
By this she earnes great store of golden crowns,
To buie her veluet kirtles, silken gownes;
This makes her braue; this makes her fine & nice;
A Cuckolds horne, it is a horne of price.

Nay more then this: which some wil think a wonder;
The Cuckolds horne maintaines the Cuckold maker.
For need the law will neuer be kept vnder.
The Vine must fall, if that the Elme forsake her:
Fertilior seges est alienis semper in aruis.
Some women in another field suppose,
That deeper grasse and better pasture growes.
Wantons are wilfull; and before they lacke (crack.
Their pleasures, they will make their purse-stringes

Scarce will you thinke a swaggering Caualier,
Which hath his garters brauely frindg'd with gold,
Swimmes in his silks, and surfets with good cheare,
And liues as pleasantly as can be told,
Onely by Cuckold-making thus should liue,
And get no more but what kind wenches giue;
Yet many gallants I haue heard report
Are now maintained after such a sort.

What should I further amplifie this matter?
Since euery honest man, which weares the horne,
Can tell for truth I neither mocke nor flatter,
Though fooles may deem I write these things in scorn.
But what they say I haue in no regard;
Nor doe I passe the censure of a knaue.
Vnto the touchstone of a Cuckolds wit
The truth for triall euer I commit.

For

For (cert's) I know they are a generation
Of wise, discreet, sage honest, sober men;
Their name it is a name of estimation,
Deseruing worthily a golden pen.
But for the horne, which fortune them hath sent
(Since it would proue so fine an ornament)
Well could I wish, that to their greater grace,
Each Cuckold had two hornes vpon his face;

And yet (graue Patrons) let me here intreat
You would not seeme my meaning to mistake.
For I protest, my loue to you is great,
Deuoted to you all for one mans sake;
And therefore thinke not that I vse this speech
Your names, estate, or credit to impeach,
Or by this wish desire your heads to harme:
For hornes will keepe your heads in winter warme

But thus the world might know what men you are;
Which be the sonnes of Fortune and of Fame;
And thus the better sort might haue a care
To giue your state what doth belong the same;
Thus might the name, to which you haue aspired,
Be both applauded, honoured, and admired:
And men would wonder at the strange euent,
To see kind Cuckolds weare this Implement.

Thus euery gentle heart and patient mind,
Which haue the hornes and willingly do weare them,
Might be perceiued from the Kestrell kind
Of froward iealous fooles which grudge to beare thē;
Thus honest Cuckolds might sequestred be
From scoffing Peasants of a base degree;
Thus might your glorie be the more increased,
And you well hooded, and your wiues wel pleased.

For

For (sooth to say needes must it please your wiues:
To see faire hornes vpon your forhead grow,
Sure that the whole demeanor of their liues,
That they desire the same, doth clearely show
And if they did not wish you such a head,
They would not so defile their marriage bed.
But vsuall practise makes plaine declaration,
They both desire and seeke this transformation.

If then such profit hereby might arise,
Both to your glorie and your wiues content:
Seeme not so great a blessing to despise,
Nor scorne the wishes of my good intent.
For 'tis not such a blemish and disgrace
To haue faire hornes to grow vpon your face,
Neither a wonder to behold this change,
Though gasing fooles at first might think it strange.

For many famous men of older daies,
(As writers doe record, and stories mention)
To their great honour and eternall praise,
Without reproch, scoffes, mockes, or reprehension,
Haue had the fore-part of their comely head
With two faire hornes full seemely furnished.
This may you well perceiue by horned *Pan*,
Which was a mightie God in shape of man.

I will not here vpon examples stand,
To cloye your minds with wonders, tales, and lies:
Onely for proofe of what I tooke in hand
These few (to passe the rest) shall now suffice
Cippus, the valiant Roman, who tooke scorne
To be a King, (though chosen by the horne)
Did by his hornes become so much renowned,
That they on postes were painted, and he crowned.

When

When lustie *Ioue* was once a wanton louer,
And woo'd *Europa*, King *Agenors* daughter,
That he in secret might his loue discouer,
(Althogh he knew some fools would make a laughter
To see the same) yet on his head he bare
Of faire bright shining hornes a comely paire:
And therefore *Ouids* booke (of leasings full)
Doth faine that *Ioue* was turned to a Bull.

Cornua parua quidem.

Puraque magis perlucida gemma.

On strange and foraine proofes what should I stay?
Or tell of antique matters long agone?
The time would faile me, if I should assay,
To number all the persons one by one,
Which to their glorie and their hearts content
Haue on their forheads worne this implement:
Our present time for truth can testifie,
It is no Monster, wonder, nor a lye.

For in the North is situate a Towne,
Bounding vpon the Riuer, named Aire,
Which for the Trade of Clothing is well knowne,
And for strong nappie Ale hath great repaire,
Whereas an honest man did lately dwell,
(A patient Cuckold, as Report doth tell)
Which had a horne fast growing by his eye,
To shew that hornes belong to Cuckoldrie.

Loe here (cornuted Seigniors) here you see
It is no wonder for to weare a horne,
No shame or blemish vnto your degree,
No staine, disgrace, reproch, contempt, or scorne;
But famous, full of glorie and renowne,
As ancient Writers haue set truly downe.
'Tis but conceit, that hornes will looke so grimly,
Doe but beleeue, and they will fit you trimly.

And, in my iudgement, if you had them growing,
That each one might discerne them with his eye,
Fooles would not vse their mocks and apish mowing,
Nor knaues so much deride your grauitie.
For they perceiuing how the hornes would grace
The superficies of your honest face,
Point with their fingers, as if that their taunting
Did shew, that somthing frō your heds were wāting.

Whereas if hornes were present to their sight,
What should they with their fingers need to shew it?
Since by this meanes a purblind fellow might
Perceiue your worth, and by the horns might know it.
And then would scoffing Peasants cease to prate,
Because that others plainely see your state;
Then sawcie fellows, which their neighbors flout,
Wold cease to mock, their own horns peeping out.

Thus should your name be had in wondrous feare,
And not a man, from greatest to the least,
Should dare to mocke a Cuckold for his eare,
Nor once against the hornes to breake a iest:
Nor seeme anothers fortune to deride,
For feare the same good lucke might him betide:
And thus I hope your heads haue vnderstood
What fruit would blossome, if your hornes did bud.

But let vs put the case, as some suppose,
That fleering fooles for this might more deride you:
Nought by their misdemeanour doe you lose,
Neither (ywis) doth greater shame betide you.
Hereby your merit is the more augmented,
If you with patience hold your selues contented;
Thē scorn that childish scoffes shold make you sorie,
The more you suffer, more will be your glorie.

Neuer

Neuer caſt downe your heads, nor be aſhamed,
Though graceleſſe wits vnkindly you entreat;
Your bleſſed fortune cannot be defamed,
Nor prating ſlanderous tongues your praiſe defeat:
For though your worth and credit in the ſight
Of ſcoffing perſons be accounted light,
Yet in the iudgement of the wiſer ſort,
A Cuckold is a name of good report.

And in defence of all the Patient traine
Here I, as Challenger, doe readie ſtand,
Iuſtly to proue, vphold, and to maintaine
Againſt the proudeſt Champion in this land,
That no Promotion, Calling, or Degree
Can be free from the ſtate of Cuckoldrie;
And that the Hornepipe is as ſweet a fit
As euer Fidler playd vpon his *Kit.

Pasquils challenge.

*A kind of Inſtrument.

What Countrey in this Vniuerſe is knowne,
Which can affirme from Cuckolds it is free?
What Kingdome, Prouince, Borough, Citie, Towne,
In all the world exempted doe we ſee?
Which hath not more or leſſe (as Fortune pleaſed)
The number of kind Cuckolds ſtill encreaſed,
Or could not yeeld at one time or another
A horned Father or a horned Mother.

Greatly this title through the world is carried,
And ſo encreaſeth, as we heare by fame,
That if it mought it would be to the married,
As *Homo* is to men a common name.
And this we ſee apparant at this day,
For as a ſtranger trauailes by the way,
If any married perſons dog doth ſturre,
Straight one or other calls him Cuckolds curre.

Truly I doe not much mislike these words,
Because he is, or else may be hereafter,
Although I would not haue them with their boords
Miscall the Cuckolds dog, to make a laughter:
Nor would I wish a Cuckold goe to law
For such an idle iest, not worth a straw;
Neither for this disgrace to brawle or curse,
His state is better, and his dog no worse.

Much is his state the better, as we may
Perceiue by that which is alreadie said,
And if with patience he can beare away
The Apish mockes, which sometimes will be made:
Besides his glorie (which before I quoted)
A valiant-minded man he shall be noted.
*Stronger he is that holds his furie downe,
Than he which winnes a Fort, or walled Towne.

Fortior est qui se, quàm qui fortissima vincit mœnia.

Great is a Cuckolds honor and his fame,
And wondrous is the glorie of his fate,
Which makes some persons so desire the name,
And with such greedinesse the horne await,
That for because none other will aread
To make them Cuckolds, and to arme their head,
They are content, when time and place importune,
To be the caruers of their owne good fortune.

Thus *Cephalus* in Athens vnperceiu'd,
Like to a merchant clad, his wife did trie:
And thus another man his wife deceiu'd,
Which did belong to *Loues kind Familie*.
Thus on their own heads some haue graft the horn,
For very loue they haue to Cuckolds borne.
Which makes me thinke, because of others wish,
That Cuckoes egges are sure a daintie dish.

Of

Of all the men that euer I haue knowne,
A Cuckold doth for kindneſſe beare the bell,
Which for his proper vſe keepes not his owne,
But giues in common to his friends as well:
And ſo to courteſie he is allyed,
What ere you aske ſhall hardly be denyed:
That if his wife would any way befriend you,
He will not ſticke his very wife to lend you.

But to his wife, the world doth not containe
A kinder man, replete with all ciuilitie:
Doe what ſhe will, he murmures not in vaine,
But giues her ſcope with all facilitie:
Nor (though ſhe graft the horne) doth he cõplaine,
Since he can doe as much for her againe.
If I by nature had beene borne a woman,
A Cuckold I would haue, or marrie no man.

In vaine it is, and needleſſe for to ſpend
My worthleſſe prayſes on a Cuckolds name:
Words I ſhould ſooner want, them to commend,
Than make a Period fully to their fame:
Or yeeld them all the honor which is due,
And doth of right 'long to the horned crue;
Onely a glimpſe I giue vnto their glorie,
Not able t'reach the height of ſuch a ſtorie.

For how ſhould I a Cuckolds prayſe enchaine
Within the compaſſe of my ſhallow quill,
Which all the ſpacious world doth ſcarce containe,
Such ſtore of Cuckolds euery corner fill:
And ſuch a wondrous troupe the Hornpipe treads,
One cannot paſſe another for their heads,
That ſhortly we ſhall haue (as *Skelton* ieſts)
A greater ſort of horned men than beaſts.

If all the Cuckolds in the world were preſt,
And ranged for the field in battaile-ray,
So great an Armie there would be addreſt,
As neuer was the like ſeene to this day:
For ſuch a number would encamped lie,
That *Xerxes* Hoaſt, which dranke huge Riuers drie,
Nor all the Armies which haue beene prepared,
Might with this band of Cuckolds be compared.

Caſt vp the number of the birds that flie,
Reckon the ſands which are vpon the ſhore,
Or tell the golden ſtarres which paue the skie,
Then mayſt thou count the Cuckolds all of yore:
For millions of men that haue beene married,
Haue vnto Cornwell without boat been carried;
And ſuch a crowd are of that reputation,
They neuer can be put in numeration.

But though a Cuckold were a word of ſhame,
And ſlander and diſgrace did ſtill attend it,
(As all men know, it is a famous name,
And many married perſons ſhould defend it)
Yet let no Cuckold take it to the heart,
Since both his friends and neighbors beare a part:
It is great comfort to a Cuckolds chance,
That many thouſands doe the Hornepipe dance.

Then to conclude (my friends of Cuckoldſhire)
Grieue not to beare the horne vpon your creſt;
Let not the ſonne be prouder than his Sire,
Your name is famous, and your fortune bleſt,
Your life is void of ſorrow and of care,
Your greateſt croſſes are but neighbors fare;
Spit in the face of Enuie and of Scorne,
There is no credit like the Cuckolds Horne.

Let

LEt none suppose I weare the Horne,
Because the famous Horne I praise,
Or that I am a Cuckold sworne,
Because his worth I seeke to raise:
No, no (poore fooles) in truth you are deceiued,
Into that Order I was nere receiued.

All are not rich that talke of gold,
Nor Merchants, which the Burse doe walke,
Nor all Diuines, which Pulpits hold,
Nor strong, which doe of *Sampson* talke:
Nor doe my words so sure my state proclame
To be a Cuckold, though I praise the name.

And yet by *Vulcans* head I sweare,
Let fleering Apes their pleasure say,
If I the richest Cuckold were
That is in England at this day,
I know not how the hornes might well content me,
But of his Liuing I should scarce repent me.

Non liber indicium est animi, sed honesta voluntas
Plurima mulcendis auribus apta refert.
Accius esset atrox: Conuiua Terentius esset:
Essent pugnaces, qui fera bella canunt:
Crede mihi, Distat Casus a carmine nostro,
Vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea est.
Ouid.

Quamobrem licet irrideat, si quis vult;
Plus apud me tamen vera ratio valebit,
quàm vulgi opinio. Cicero.

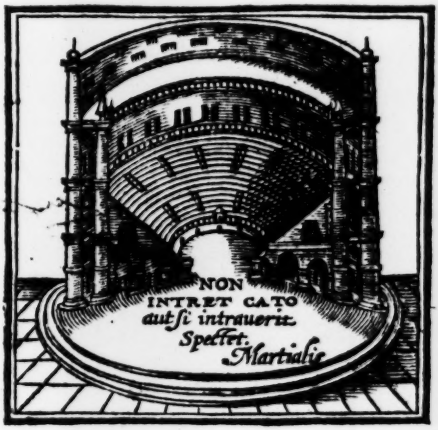
FINIS.

CORNV-COPIÆ,

Pasquils Night-cap:

OR,

Antidot for the Head-ache.



LONDON,
Printed for THOMAS THORP. 1612.

But whatsoeuer the pretence do proue,
That yong and old do iointly come together,
VVell may the woman make a shew of loue,
And smooth her brow in token of faire weather,
And at the first seeme louing on her part,
Yet sure I am shee loues him not in heart.
For if that fortune blesse her with good hap, (cap.
Doubtlesse his head shall weare a horne-wrought

And (certs) a Cuckold is a dignity,
To good by much for such a doting Swaine,
And to the worship of that Company,
It is a great discredit and a staine,
To haue that gouty Peasant reare his Crest,
And thinke himselfe a Cuckold with the best
In my conceit, his wife is much too blame,
To grace him with the credit of that name.

But here (me thinkes) I heare an apish knaue,
Demanding in his proud and scoffing fashion:
Are forked heads of late become so braue,
And hornes aspired to such reputation,
That this word (Cuckold) which was erst a name
Alwaies attended with reproach and shame,
Should on a suddaine in our times step forth,
And proue a name of credit and great worth?

VVhat glory can hee challenge, or renowne,
VVhose wife is truly noted for a whore?
Keeping anothers children as his owne,
And beares the badge of infamy before?
VVhat credit to a Cuckold can befall,
VVhose wife, as comon as VVestminster Hall,
Bestowes on others what is his by right,
And of the Forked Order dubs him Knight?

Peace

Peace prating Curre, least thou proue a dolt. Confuted
A snarling curre will barke at euery season.
The grosser foole, the sooner shoots his bolt,
Although his wordes be void of wit and reason.
Little thou know'st (poore foole) thy great amisse,
In scandalizing such a name as this;
VVhich in thy rashnesse thus dost iniury,
Thy selfe, thy friends, and famous Cuckoldry.

But whatsoe're thou art, that seem'st to scorne,
Carping the wel-fare of anothers state,
And thus derid'st the credit of the horne:
(To great a glory for a scoffing mate)
Seeke not too much a Cuckold to defame,
For feare thy selfe be subiect to that name,
True is the saying, though it seeme a iest,
The Bird is filthy that defiles her nest.

And how canst thou repute thy selfe as free,
And quite exempted from the Cuckoes song,
Since thousands (farre superiour vnto thee)
Grudge not her ditty should to them belong?
For any a man of woman borne,
Is subiect by destiny to weare the horne:
And though as yet no hornes attend vpon thee,
Fortune hereafter may bestow them on thee. *Alluvel portia.*

If thou be linked in the *Gordian* knot,
And bound in fetters of the marriage state:
Grieue not the hornes should fall vnto thy lot,
Or that the Cuckoe sings before thy gate:
For if thou marry, still make sure of this;
To beare with patience, what thy fortune is,
Neither repine a Cuckold for to bee,
But blesse thy fate, and thanke thy destiny.

And neuer loue thy wife a whit the worse,
For which (I wis) thou art beholding to her:
Nor seeme for this to frown, brawle, sweare, & [illegible]
Because she hath a little bene a doer;
But rather praise her for her kind deuotion,
Since shee hath lift thee vp to such promotion:
Be not dismai'd, though saucy knaues do iest,
Thou art exalted to beare such a crest.

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orked Order
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ew Knights.

And let base fleering scoundrels talke their fill,
And idle muddy braines out-brane their better,
The world doth want no fooles, nor euer will:
Dolts scoffe at learning, which scarce know a letter.
And lame blind *Basard* euer is as bold,
As brauer horses which for more are sold:
None is more prest to blot a Cuckolds name,
Then he which is both void of wit and shame.

Now if these spurre-blind Peasants could but see
How much themselues they blemish and disgrace:
And how they shame their friends and progeny,
Their kindred, their acquaintance, and their race,
They would not speake so rashly as they vse,
Nor seeme so much kind Cuckolds to abuse:
The greater is their folly to depraue,
That title which perchance themselues may haue.

aue ne patrem
rias.

Better it were for old men say the best,
Or else say nothing, and to hold their tongue,
Then at a Cuckold either scoffe or iest,
VVhich might as well to them before belong:
And let the married without feare and shame,
Seeke to vphold and patronize that name,
Clearer he is not which the same denies;
For (cert's) blind men do swallow many flies.

And

And as for yong men, which doe cheifly ſcorne
The ancient badge of famous Cuckoldrie:
It is their dutie to applaud the horne,
And to defend it by their chiualrie,
And at all times a Cuckolds part to take,
Both for their credits and their kindreds ſake,
Though now their head-peece be not fully caſt,
Each dog muſt haue his day: No time is paſt.

Bachelers may be Cuckolds when one is faire promiſt and an other ſpeedes.

Neither can they exempt themſelues as free,
Allthough in marriage they haue had no doing.
At Cuckolds-hauen manie landed bee
Euen in the verie time they go a woing:
And ſome haue ſuch good fortune in their play
They proue right Cuckolds on their wedding day,
For certaine I haue heard of ſuch a lurch
The verie howre before they went to Church

What perſon is he of ſo ſpeciall gift,
That can affirme he doth a Virgin Marrie?
Manie a wench hath had a ſecret lift
Which of a Virgin ſtill the name doth carrie,
In euerie corner maides there are great ſtore;
Yet diuers of them haue been tried before:
A Iade in ſmith-field ſooner may you find,
That buy a courſer, ſound of limbe and winde.

Wiſe is that child (the common Prouerb ſaith
Though ſcarce I doe beleeue it as my Creed)
Which ſo much knowledge of his father hath,
He can auouch, that this is hee indeed.
For though the mother doe proteſt and ſweare
Her husband did beget what ſhe doth beare,
Yet now-adaies men are ſo much beguild,
They oft proue fathers to an others child.

This hath the vsuall practise of this time
Made most apparant, and as cleare as day,
For when yong gentlemen be in their prime,
And giue themselues to wantonnes and play:
If that they chance a country-maid to pricke,
And with a Timpanie the wench grow sicke,
Then straight his seruingman or hackney-foole
Must be a couer to his maisters stoole.

And not alone are seruingmen so mad,
To father what an other hath begot,
But better persons now and then are glad
To taste what others put into the pot,
For scarce a wife of any gallant carriage
Doth now perfourme what she hath vow'd in mar-
And so great vertue hath attracting gold, (riage,
Manie cannot be honest, though they would.

If some seeme-chast, it doth of this proceed,
They haue the wit to doe, and not be spied,
And know by deepe dissembling and good heed,
With sober lookes their wanton lustes to hide.
Some woemen must be wo'ed, they are so chast,
And some there are which tempt poore men as fast
That to conclude, as *Ariosto* taught,
Manie of them be lewd, vnchast, and naught.

rodotus.

Phar'o, the King of *Ægypt*, being blind
For ten yeares space, made triall of this matter,
When by the *Oracle* he was assing'd
To wash his eies in such a womans water,
Which kept her faith inuiolate and right,
And neuer had to doe with any wight
But onely with her husband: Then should hee
Againe recouer sight, and clearly see

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Manie

Manie a womans water *Phar'o* tri'd:
And manie a chamber-pot to him was brought,
Yet still his sight was vnto him deni'd
Because the female vrine helped nought:
Nor could his wife releafe the wofull King
By the distilling vertue of her spring,
Long lay King *Phar'o* in great grief and paine,
Despairing euer to haue sight againe.

Vrinalls were not then in vs

And, but that one at last of honest life,
Which after manie thousands thither came,
And was approu'd a true and faithfull wife,
A modest matron, and a vertuous dame,
Restor'd his sight by vertue of the fountaine, (taine;
Which bubbled purely from her bearing mou-
He yet had liu'd in darkenesse, and been blinde
For such Phisitions still are hard to find.

Here may the reader 3. thinges chiefly gather,
What store of hornes were extant by this matter; 1
How hardly then a child could know his father, 2
And what the vertue was of womens water. 3
The first many might challenge as their right;
The last had power to giue the blind their sight;
And how could children know their fathers well,
When as their mothers truly could not tell.

Much could I wish that *Phar'o* were to trie
The vertue of this medicine once againe,
That we might see what faith and loialtie
In married wiues doth at this day remaine.
Sure manie of them, which haue done amisse,
Would say they had the stone, & could not pisse:
And manie which we iudge could not be blamed,
Then to make water would be much ashamed.

Then

Then ſhould you ſee ſome woemen, which make
Of pure behauiour, and great honeſtie, (ſhowe
VVhich will not touch a man, for ought we know,
Nor once bee ſeene in prophane companie:
VVhich walke in little ruffes, and ſet their face
So ſimpringly, as if they ſtill ſaid grace:
Then ſhould you ſee them by their vrinall
To bee found meerely hypocriticall.

Then ſhould you ſee, how daintie and preciſe
Manie fine minions would be at this matter
Affirming that it could not helpe his eies,
To haue them waſhed in a womans water;
But that it was the ſuperſtitious tricke
Of ſome prophane, vngodlie Catholique,
Becauſe within the Primitiue of yore,
They neuer read of ſuch a thing before.

Then ſhould you ſee ſome men, which doe deride
And ſcoffe at others wearing of the horne,
VVhen their owne wiues did come for to bee tride,
How they ſhould be requited with like ſcorne,
Then manie woemen, which ſeeme coie and nice,
VVould be diſſemblers found by this deuice:
So that if *Pharo* now releaſt would bee,
It would be long, ere he ſhould clearly ſee.

Nath'les I will not bee too cynicall,
To condemne euerie woman for this fault,
Nor for a certaine number blemiſh all.
Each beggar is not lame, though manie hault.
Nor euerie woman of ſo ſmall compunction,
To violate her faith and holie function
For many woemen (doubtleſſe) may be found
VVhich keep their plighted promiſe whole & ſoũd

And

And God forbid, that wee ſhould all condemne,
Though all do taſte the tree of good and ill:
For in ſo great a number, ſome of them
Muſt needes bee honeſt (though againſt their will)
Some are for feare as modeſt as they may, (play:
And worldly ſhame which holds them from their
And ſome reſerue their loyalty vntainted,
Becauſe with Gallants they are not acquainted.

And ſome for want of more conuenient place,
And time, which for ſuch pleaſures are elected,
Preſerue themſelues from blemiſh and diſgrace;
Chiefely, becauſe they would not be ſuſpected:
And ſome for other idle vnknowne cauſe,
Obſerue a while their vowes and marriage lawes:
But very few of them, which to the laſt
For loue of honeſty continues chaſt.

Sometimes the golden prey doth make the theife,
And women yeeld for further maintenance:
Sometimes ſhort commons makes them ſeek releife:
And ſtubborne vſage and ſterne countenance,
Perforce conſtraine a woman now and than
To ſeeke for comfort of a kinder man; (married,
And ſometime want of heartes, when handes are
Is one great cauſe, that many haue miſcarried.

For 'tis not now as erſt in elder daies,
When marriage was contracted by affection,
For kindred now ſo much the matter ſwaies,
The parties haue ſmall choice in loues election;
But many times, ere one behold the other
An vnaduiſed match the friends do ſmother:
And howſoeuer they two can agree,
Their frends haue woo'd, & they muſt married be.